



# Historical Geography

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commentary, and reviews*

Irish Historical Geographies, Pt.2  
Volume 42, 2014

# Historical Geography

## Volume 42 – 2014

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Historical Geography is an annual journal that publishes scholarly articles, book reviews, conference reports, and commentaries. The journal encourages an interdisciplinary and international dialogue among scholars, professionals, and students interested in geographic perspectives on the past. Concerned with maintaining historical geography's ongoing intellectual contribution to social scientific and humanities-based disciplines, Historical Geography is especially committed to presenting the work of emerging scholars.

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## HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY: EDITORIAL UPDATE

This is my (Garth Myers) final issue as a co-editor, as Arn Keeling of Memorial University of Newfoundland steps in alongside Maria Lane of the University of New Mexico as the two co-editors for the 2015 volume. It has been an adventurous decade at *Historical Geography*, to say the least. I feel that, for much of the time since I came on to the team in 2005 to co-edit with Karen Morin and Dydia DeLeyser, I have been the lesser partner, the silent partner, or at least the stealth partner because of the strong efforts of my fellow co-editors. At the same time, I am proud to have been a part of helping this journal weather the following storms (and, in the first case, literally it was a storm): that of its very existence post-Katrina; its uncertainties with a disappearing publisher/managing editor; its transition to a new role as journal of the Historical Geography Specialty Group of the AAG; its transition to an all-digital format; and its subsequent move to the University of New Mexico. Just writing that sentence reminds me how many challenges the journal has faced, and yet also of the pleasure of working with Karen, Dydia, Maria, and now Arn to publish some very high-quality, groundbreaking work in historical geography, for a full decade.

The journal is in very good hands with Maria and Arn, and with its permanent home at the University of New Mexico. As readers will no doubt be aware by now, we utilize the Open Journals Systems platform hosted by UNM Libraries, publishing all of our content digitally and conducting all production activities online. The OJS platform streamlines everything from peer review and copyediting to subscription management, and we are extremely grateful to the UNM Libraries for providing this resource and the technical support we need to use it. We wish to thank our UNM-based team, including Jon Wheeler for conscientious technical support and Tina Faris (an MS Geography student at UNM) for her outstanding editorial and production assistance.

*Historical Geography* continues to look forward to hearing from authors, subscribers, and potential guest editors through our OJS site at [ejournals.unm.edu/index.php/historicalgeography](http://ejournals.unm.edu/index.php/historicalgeography). Authors should use the online portal for article submission, and we encourage submissions that use diverse digital media forms for both analysis and presentation. Subscribers can begin or renew subscriptions through the subscription portal, in order to enjoy access to *HG* content in the first twelve months after publication. (All *HG* content is fully open-access after the first year.) Members of the AAG's Historical Geography Specialty Group receive subscriptions to *HG* as a benefit of their HGSG membership. We also offer digital subscriptions to both individuals and libraries. Those who are interested in editing a future special issue on a particular theme should contact Maria Lane ([mdlane@unm.edu](mailto:mdlane@unm.edu)) and Arn Keeling ([akeeling@mun.ca](mailto:akeeling@mun.ca)) to discuss topical and scheduling considerations.

I would also like to acknowledge the authors here, whose contributions have made Volume 42 one of the "thickest" issues in *HG*'s history - despite, of course, the lack of a thick hardcover journal! In fact, the digital format now makes this "thick" issue cost-effective; it would have been far too costly to have this many articles in the old (print) days. This issue offers the second Part of our special theme section on Irish Historical Geographies, edited by Gerry Kearns. The theme section blossomed to twelve research articles, in addition to Gerry Kearns' introduction to the section; Parts One and Two, combined, will provide a benchmark for years to come of the best and brightest work in historical geography from and/or about (global) Ireland. This issue is graced with the presence of a lively and provocative essay from Anne Knowles, her 2014 Distinguished

Historical Geographer Lecture from the AAG meeting in Tampa – where Anne was elected as the new President of the HGSG. Volume 42 contains five other research articles, as well as numerous book reviews.

This is also the final issue as Book Review Editor for Soren Larsen of the University of Missouri, as John Bauer of the University of Nebraska-Kearney steps in to that role for Volume 43 next year. I would like to join Maria and Arn in thanking Soren for just short of a decade in charge of the reviews, which remain a vital segment of the journal.

Garth Myers  
*Trinity College*



# DISTINGUISHED HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY LECTURE, 2013

## Why We Must Make Maps: Historical Geography as a Visual Craft

Anne Kelly Knowles

*Department of Geography  
Middlebury College*

I would like to thank Bob Wilson, Maria Lane, and Garth Myers for selecting me for this honor. It means a great deal to me. I welcome the opportunity to reflect on what I value in historical geography, a field that I have loved and sought to promote throughout my academic career.

The title of my talk sums up an argument that I have been making implicitly for decades. I now want to make it explicit. If historical geographers can embrace the visual craft in what we do, while opening ourselves to more creative collaboration, we can make major contributions to emerging fields of interdisciplinary scholarship, particularly in the digital humanities and geovisualization. If we do not, we will once again be left behind.

I would like to start by telling you about my own first encounters with our sub-discipline, to explain why, for me, historical-geographical research is necessarily full of images, especially maps. This will answer the first question: Why do I make maps? Then I will turn to Brian Harley's deconstruction of the kind of cartography that I was taught. Harley asks an important question: Why do historical geographers' maps tell us so little about humanity? My answer points in two directions: (1) the role of collaboration in creative scholarship, and (2) the connection between historical geography and the Digital Humanities.

### Why I make maps

Like so many Americans, I went through school with no formal education in geography. In sixth grade, a friend and I made a model of an Amazonian village out of home-made play-doh (on one side of a brown river stood several lumpy trees; on the other, several slab-walled, toothpick-roofed huts). In eighth-grade Civics class, Mr. Driver told us to make a map of a state. I chose Louisiana and lost myself for days drawing its fringed coastline, highways, cities, and the Mississippi River. What geography I learned came from family trips, when I played navigator and soaked up my father's fascination with historical sites. My undergraduate college, Duke University, had no geography department and no geography courses. I filled my time working for the daily student newspaper and then founded a tabloid magazine of politics and the arts.

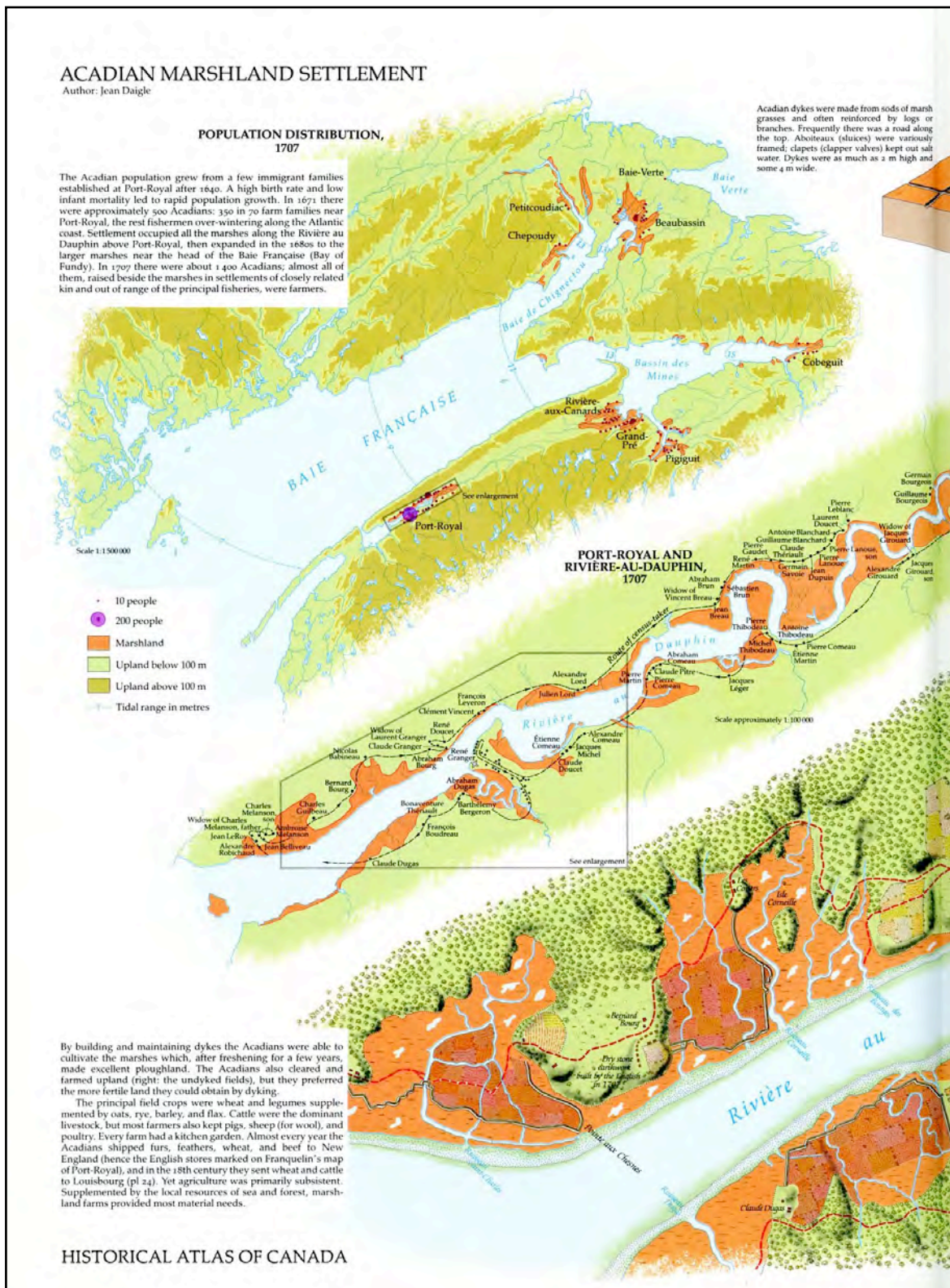
I had my first exposure to the discipline of geography in Chicago, where I worked in a series of editing jobs at textbook publishing companies. At Dorsey Press, the publisher conceived of a new U.S. history textbook for which he hired Michael Conzen to develop over one hundred new thematic maps, hoping that a full-color "map program" would distinguish the book in a crowded market. As the book's developmental editor, I was given the extraordinary assignment of meeting with Michael to hash out ideas and coordinate the maps' creation with a firm called Mapping Specialists in Madison, Wisconsin.

My working meetings with Michael were intensive seminars in historical geography. He could not resist introducing me to historical atlases and Arthur Robinson's rules of map design. I especially remember one evening when I was trying to convince Michael to simplify a map whose design I thought was far too challenging for our undergraduate audience. Leaning in for emphasis, Michael said, "But Anne, I want to build cathedrals in their minds!" I burst out laughing at his outrageous zeal and ambition. But Michael's enthusiasm worked a magical transformation in my imagination. I was thrilled to see the continent turned on its side in what he called "a satellite view of North America in 1650." I learned how one's sense of history changes with a change of scale as he explained general and specific settlement patterns in New England. And I found historical events, such as the massing of British troops at Boston, more meaningful when I saw them unfold in a series of maps.<sup>1</sup>

From Michael I learned that maps are uniquely valuable sources for historical research, that maps can tell stories, and that the lengthy process of creating a map combines assiduous research with creative thinking and graphic design. I agreed with him that maps should be elegant and exciting, communicate clearly, and always contribute substantively to the argument. The book on which we collaborated, *America's History* (1987), was immediately imitated; every self-respecting textbook publisher needed a full-color map program in their flagship history survey text. Working with Michael, I witnessed a brilliant geographic thinker conceiving of historical interpretations that were informed by knowledge of geographic, historical, and cartographic scholarship. I also saw how his ideas were refined through our own editorial discussion and the back-and-forth exchanges with cartographers at Mapping Specialists. This became my model for productive collaboration.

No wonder I hurried to graduate school at University of Wisconsin-Madison (Michael's alma mater and the place where Onno Brauer, who owned Mapping Specialists, ran the Geography Department's cartography lab). At Madison I met another visual-historical artisan: David Woodward. David's cartography course began my apprenticeship as a mapmaker. His history of cartography course inculcated the inclusive yet rigorous approach that was shaping the History of Cartography Project, which was humming busily in the garret offices in Science Hall. From Woodward and his close collaborator, Brian Harley, I learned that cartography was rules + craft + science + history + art + poetry + politics.<sup>2</sup> These were the days of Rapidograph pens, ruby-tipped scribes, and photographic developing, layer by layer, in the darkroom. My slow work at the light table was a kind of meditation. It allowed me to dwell with the map as it took shape, while larger contexts gradually formed in my mind.

Up to this point I have talked about personal encounters that influenced my sense of historical geography. One also encounters texts, of course. In 1987, the year I began graduate school, came the inaugural publication of three landmark projects: volume one of *The History of Cartography*, Harley and Woodward's *Cartography in Prehistoric, Ancient, and Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean*; the *Historical Atlas of Canada's* first volume, *From the Beginning to 1800*, edited by R. Cole Harris with senior cartographer Geoffrey Matthews; and Donald Meinig's *Atlantic America, 1492 - 1800*, the first of four volumes in *The Shaping of America*.<sup>3</sup> Woodward and Harley's original vision for the History of Cartography Project continues to inspire its crew, now captained by Matthew Edney. Harris and Matthews set a high bar for cartographic historical scholarship that few other historical atlases have met. Meinig's book garnered praise from geographers and historians for its scope, erudition, and distinctly geographical interpretation of American history.<sup>4</sup>



**Figure 1a.** Jean Daigle, "Acadian Marshland Settlement," plate 29 (R. Cole Harris, ed., *Historical Atlas of Canada*, vol. 1, *From the Beginning to 1800* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987]).



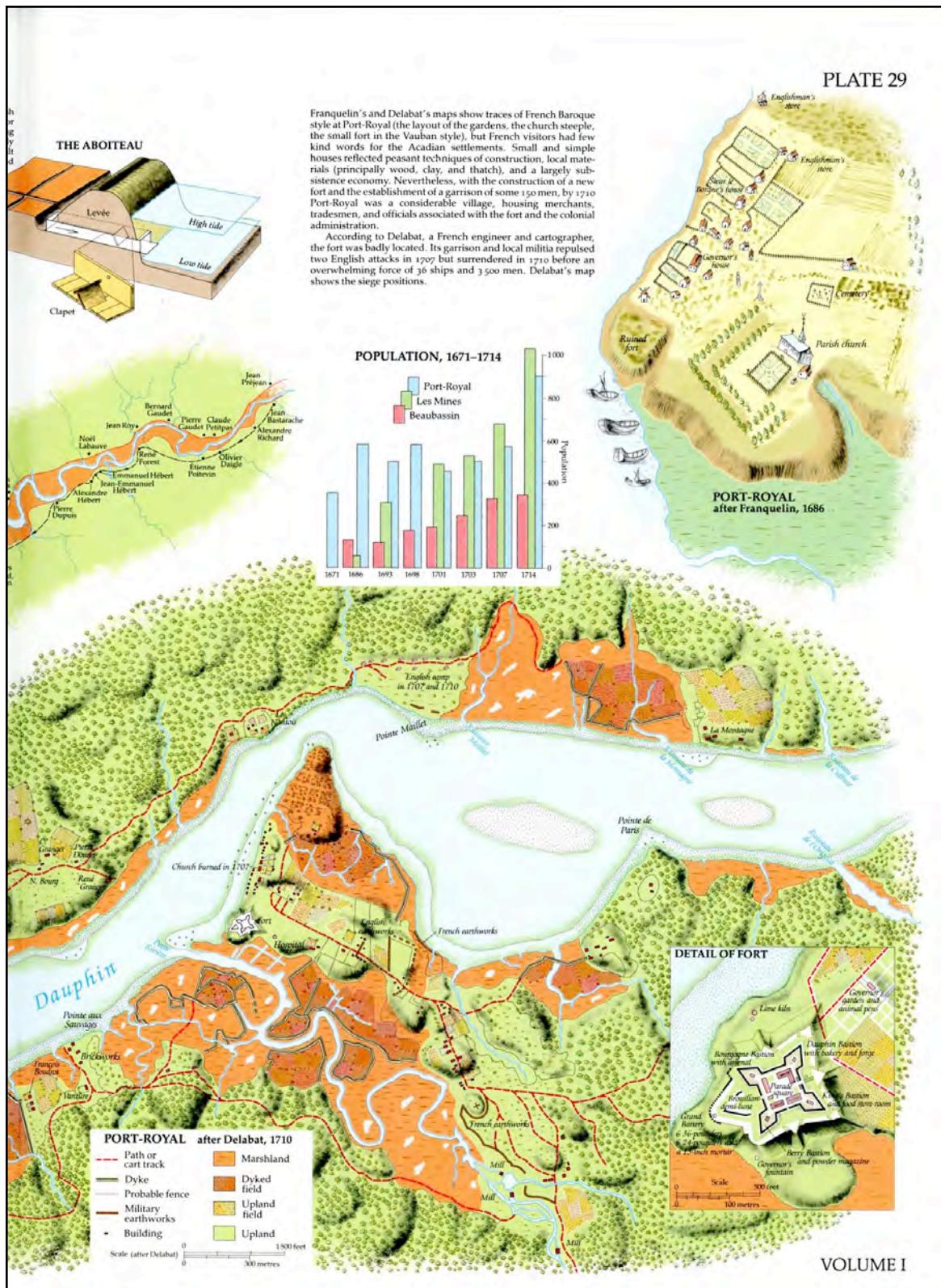


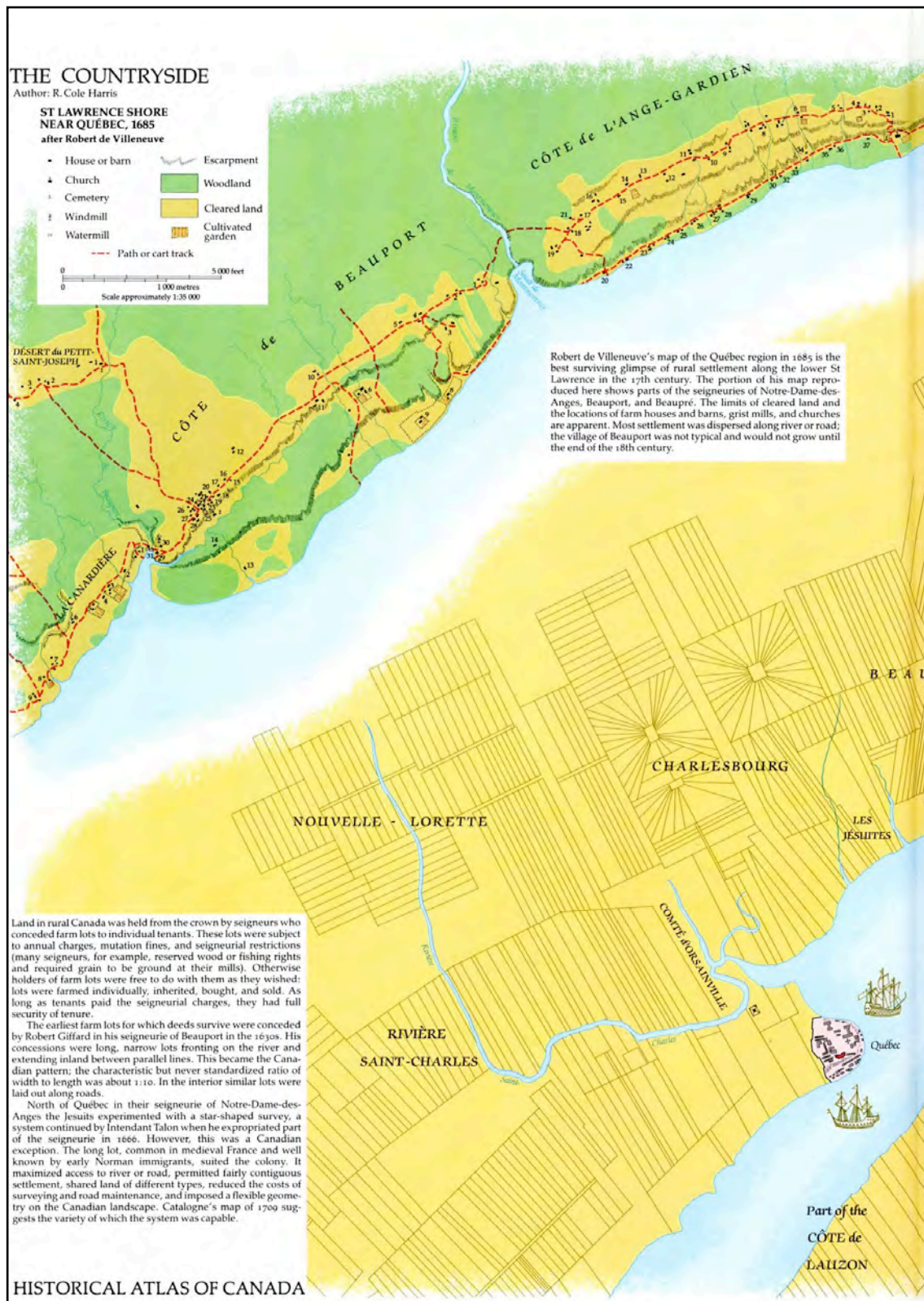
Figure 1b. .

While I share others' admiration for the tremendous scholarship in these works, I always found them most inspiring as visual explanations, particularly Harris and Matthews's atlas and Meinig's *Atlantic America*. The most arresting plates in the Canadian atlas, to my eyes, are those that approach a kind of cartographic realism. The best example is the plate on "Acadian Marshland Settlement" (Figure 1). At three perfectly nested scales, the two-page spread shows us Acadian settlement along the Bay of Fundy, circa 1707; the string of tiny settlements along the Dauphin River; and, claiming nearly half of the visual real estate, a topographic portrait of the marshes, dyked fields, military defenses, and snippets of ribbon settlement along winding paths in 1710. We also get two close-up views of the fort and central village of Port Royal. In a later section we get "The Countryside" (Figure 2), Cole Harris's summary of settlement along the middle St. Lawrence. He and Matthews used three visual and spatial modes: a newly drawn map of settlers' homes along the shore in 1685; a redrawn cadastral survey of the neighborhood around Charlesbourg; and a painting from 1730 that depicts the region's vernacular architecture and land use. This plate exemplifies multi-dimensional historical representation. Harris and Matthews knew that no one map, image, or diagram could represent historical conditions and ways of life, let alone the many modes of geographic analysis and interpretation. While their commitment to reveal the many aspects of past geographies makes some plates in this atlas bewilderingly complex, when they get it right, their visual craft feeds our curiosity. They bring the past close while enabling us to see its structure.

Meinig's spatial diagrams bowled me over as a grad student, and they still do. I consider them the clearest expressions of his spatial thinking. They work on the imagination in ways that his carefully worded exegesis rarely does. His map of the widening gyre of the Atlantic World (Figure 3) captures the circulating connections of fishing, slaving, and trade in the early seventeenth century. The arrows carve restless inscriptions. Better than any map I know, this one makes the ocean its subject, reducing early colonial ports to the touch-points they were for mariners. This image is not as inventive as the upside-down Mediterranean that Jacques Bertin drew for Fernand Braudel,<sup>5</sup> but Meinig's image has more narrative potential. I see people and stories crossing Meinig's Atlantic, whereas Bertin's surprise, once you orient yourself, fades to geographical facts (for example, that the desert of Northern Africa obstructed Mediterranean Europeans' awareness of the lush, peopled equatorial zone to the south).

Meinig was particularly adept at conceptualizing the spatial form of geographical processes. In writing, he eschewed theory. He presented his craft as the art of geographic description—"mere" description, some critics might say.<sup>6</sup> His comparative spatial diagrams, however, are steps toward a historically specific pattern language that models geographic and historical change.<sup>7</sup> Meinig's diagram of "Three Colonial Types" of interaction between Europeans and Native peoples (Figure 4) anticipates Bruno Latour's concept of the metropole as a center of calculation where information about newly identified lands was gathered, analyzed, and then used in crafting policies that were enacted on remote frontiers.<sup>8</sup> Even more Latouresque is his "conspectus," or overview, of colonial spatial relations (Figure 5). Meinig discards geographic realism to highlight the abstract connections of capital investment and colonial rule that laced North American and Caribbean colonies into the British Atlantic empire. This representation of core-periphery relations suggests bondage; it suggests the abstraction of the imperial gaze and the accounting mentality that calculated the immense value of the sugar islands (Barbados, Grenada, Antigua, and Jamaica) to the British treasury and British foreign policy, and that made Britain in the early eighteenth century such a willing participant in African slavery. The diagram even suggests the shallow reach of British territorial control in North America, a problem that would undermine British land campaigns during the Revolutionary War.<sup>9</sup>





**Figure 2a.** R. Cole Harris, "The Countryside," plate 52 (Harris, ed., *Historical Atlas of Canada*, vol. 1, *From the Beginning to 1800* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987]).



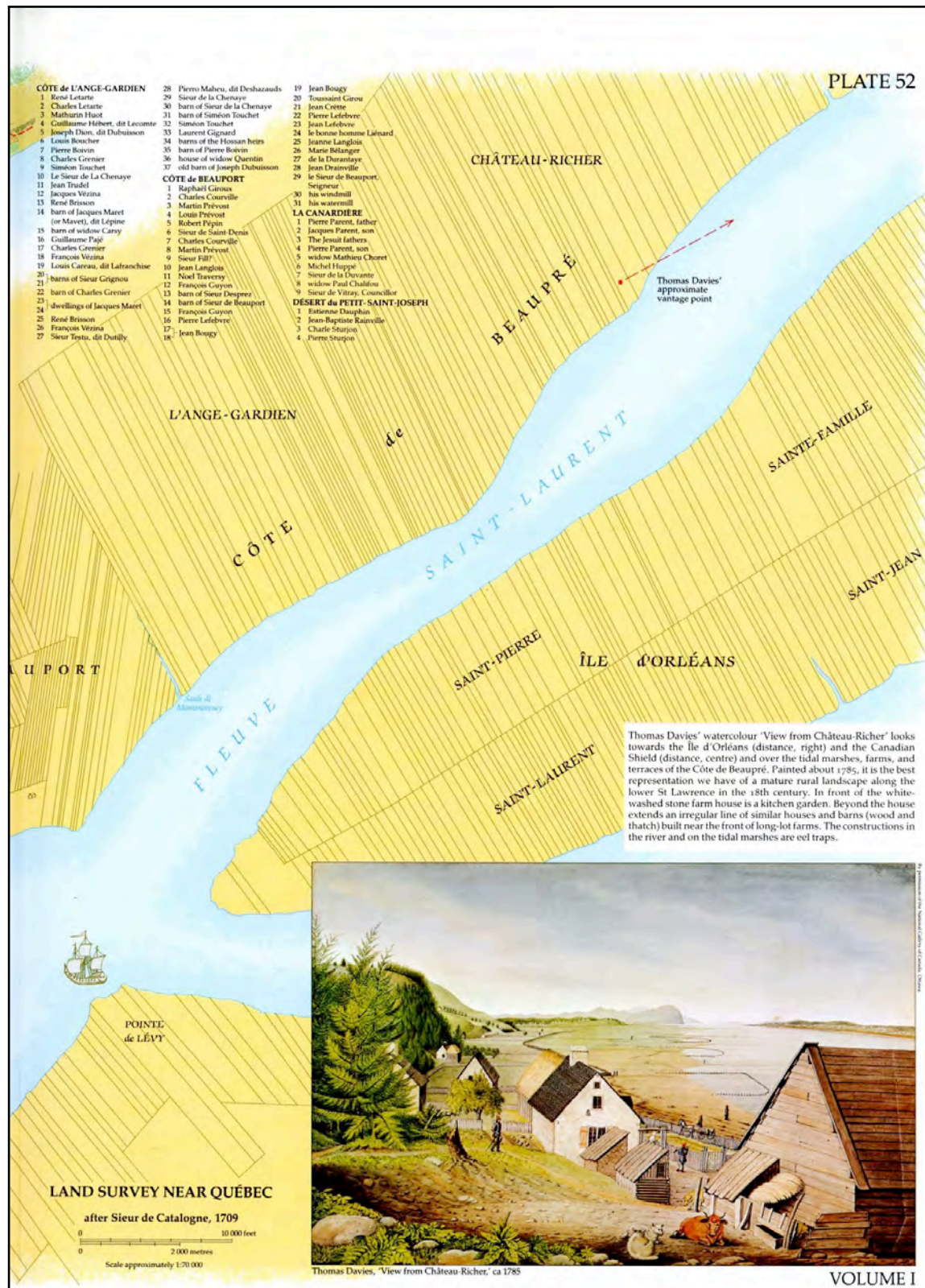
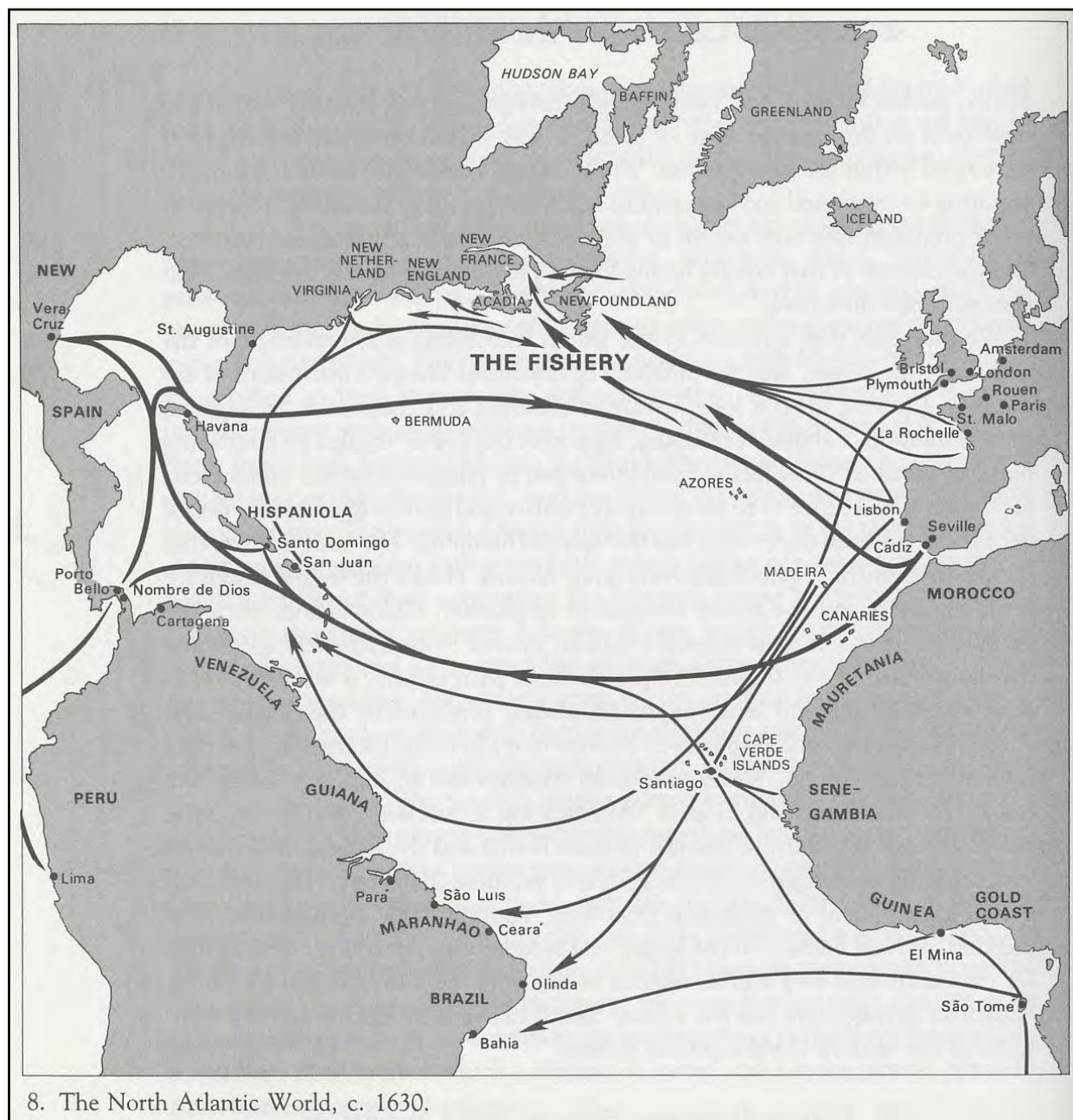


Figure 2b.

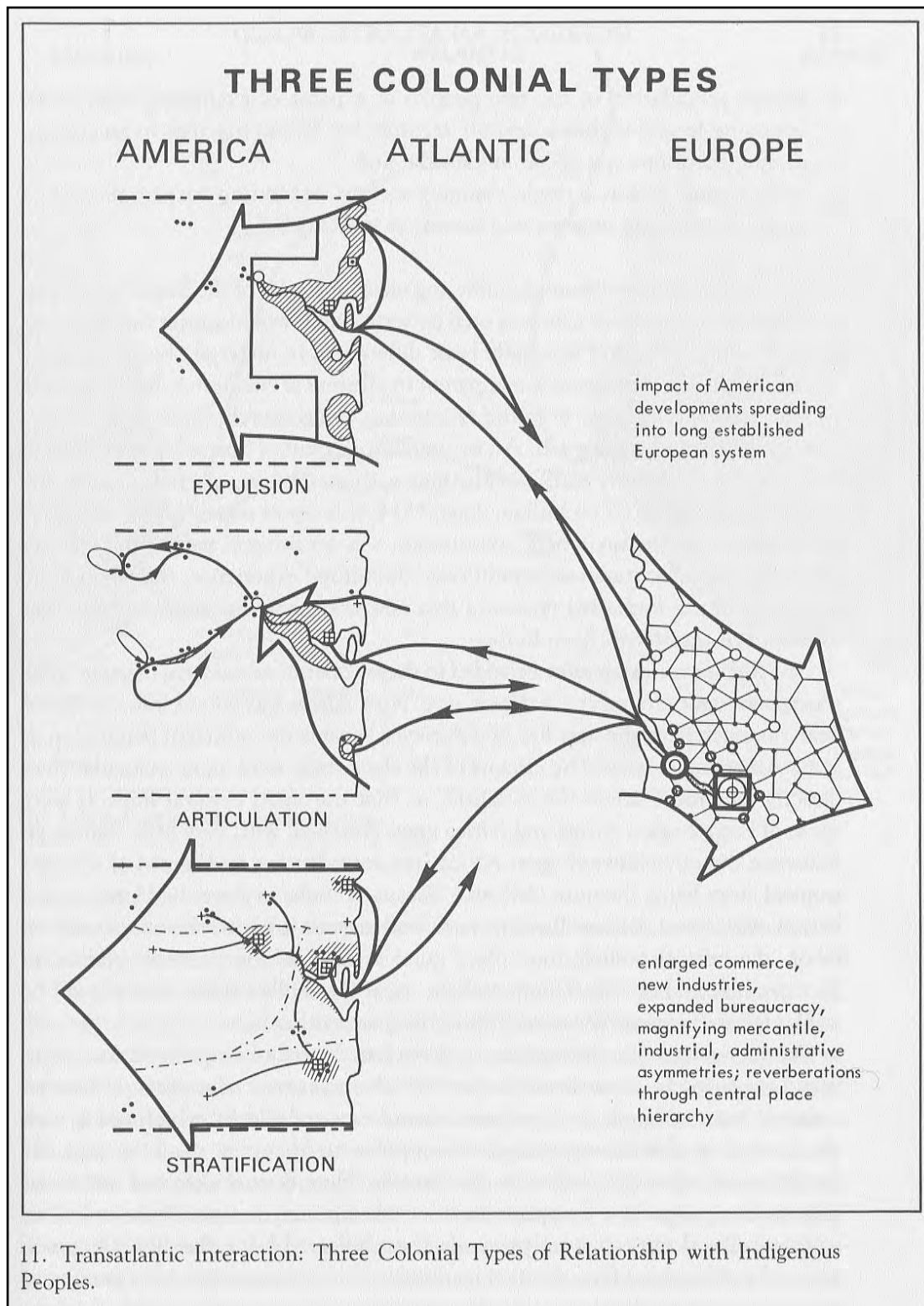




**Figure 3.** "The North Atlantic World, c. 1630" (Donald W. Meinig, *The Shaping of America*, vol. 1, *Atlantic America, 1492 – 1800* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987], p. 56).

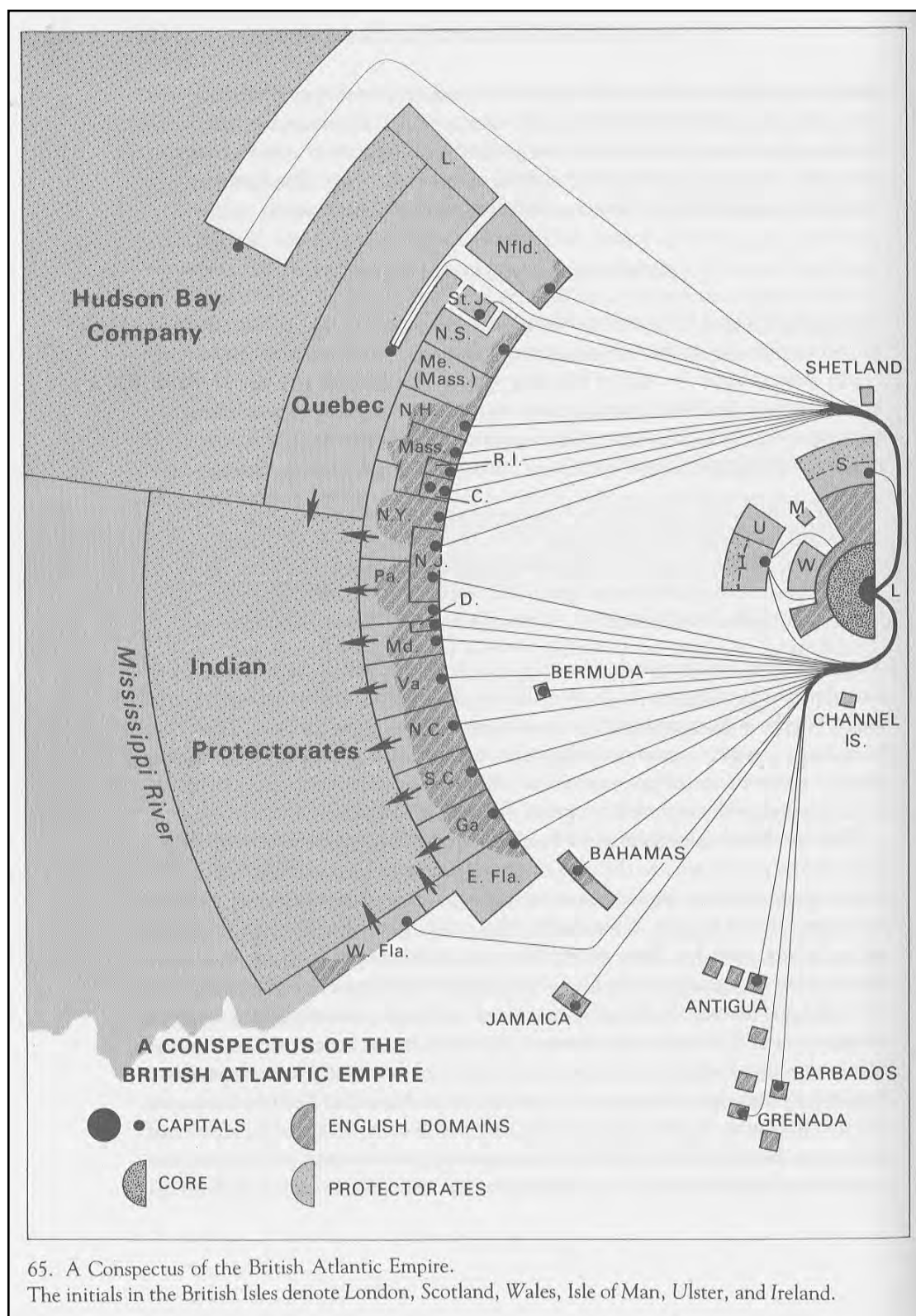
I may give Meinig undue credit for theoretical insight where his maps are concerned. He has never claimed that his maps carry interpretive, let alone theoretical, weight. In his 1983 essay "Geography as an Art," Meinig discusses "the craft of geography" as a purely literary endeavor, whose "routine fundamentals" we employ when "we organize our thoughts, select our data, choose our words, and make our statements..."<sup>10</sup>

Unable to find any reference to mapmaking in his writing, I asked Don a few years ago how he had made the maps in *The Shaping of America*. "Oh," he said lightly, "I would just sketch a



**Figure 4.** "Transatlantic Interaction: Three Colonial Types of Relationships with Indigenous Peoples" (Donald W. Meinig, *The Shaping of America*, vol. 1, *Atlantic America, 1492 – 1800* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987], p. 71).





**Figure 5.** “A Conspectus of the British Atlantic Empire” (Donald W. Meinig, *The Shaping of America*, vol. 1, *Atlantic America, 1492 – 1800* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987], p. 376).

few ideas and give them to the cartographer, who then made the maps.”<sup>11</sup> Since then, I discovered that his most unusual maps were the result of a creative collaboration with a print-maker-turned-cartographer named Marcia Harrington. Harrington told me that Meinig did indeed provide pencil sketches to get her started, but that the meat of his communication came in his explanation of the concepts and geographical relationships that he wanted a map to show—“the theory behind things,” as she put it. Meinig always knew exactly what he wanted, Harrington said, but it was up to her to find the best visual expression of his conceptualizations.<sup>12</sup> Marcia Harrington designed each of the spatial diagrams I have shown here, and many more. It is her rendering of Meinig’s ideas that I, and so many others, have admired all these years.

### **The problem of positivistic historical cartography: Harley’s argument**

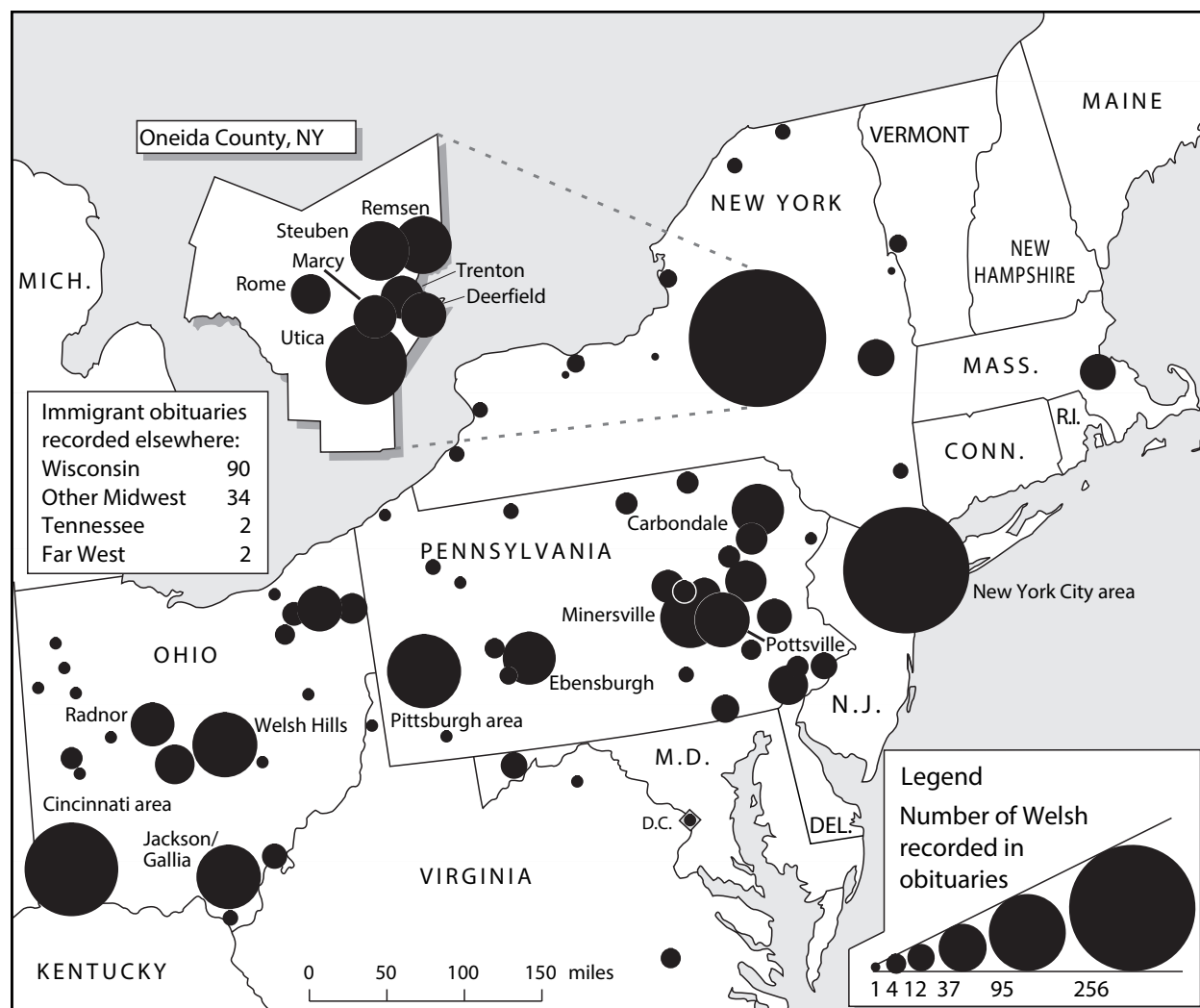
The creative working relationships between Meinig and Harrington, Harris and Matthews, and, to a lesser extent, Conzen and Mapping Specialists, were exceptions to the typical relationship that Brian Harley describes in “Historical Geography and the Cartographic Illusion.” This piece, one of his lesser-known essays, was published in the *Journal of Historical Geography* in 1989.<sup>13</sup> For all Harley’s importance as perhaps the single most influential figure in the history of cartography, many are unaware that he began as an historical geographer, doing his PhD at Birmingham University on the historical geography of medieval Warwickshire.<sup>14</sup> There he was presumably trained in the kind of scientific mapping of historical data that made Clifford Darby’s mapping of the Domesday Book the epitome of innovative historical geography in Britain at the time.<sup>15</sup>

Harley’s essay is an excoriating critique of cartographic practice in historical geography and, more broadly, of academic cartography as a whole. He begins by pointing out that historical cartography—that is, mapping the past—“has remained...an unexamined aspect of our creative scholarship.” He sets out to fill that gap. Harley demands that maps for history should be understood as texts, and that historical geography, “like art,” is “a social practice” whose representations should be produced with the full consciousness of engaged, critical scholarship.<sup>16</sup> This argument was part of his broader effort in the late 1980s to shake geographers free from their scientific assumptions and to anchor historical geography and cartography in deconstructionist theory. Unlike his other essays from this period, this one focuses on how present-day geographers produced and thought about maps.

Ordinarily, Harley explains, a scholar hands over sketches or compilations for a cartographer to render for publication.<sup>17</sup> This practice has serious consequences. It disengages historical geographers from the cartographic process, which perpetuates their failure “to grasp the illusion of cartographic representation.” What is the illusion? That maps are a mirror of reality. “It is as if an army of ghost writers had written a large part of our texts for us,” Harley writes. “We have failed to question the inner logic, the rhetoric, and the style of the map in the same way that we would question the syntax of the written word. We have abrogated to the cartographers a part of our discourse, on the assumption that their standard techniques could somehow redescribe the past for us in more rigorous terms...”<sup>18</sup>

Harley’s main target in “Cartographic Illusion” is thematic maps, a category that was the brainchild of Arthur Robinson, father of the Wisconsin school of cartography. Robinson was lead author of a widely used textbook, *The Elements of Cartography*, which presented map-making as a science based on ever-increasing accuracy and fidelity in representing the earth and its human-made features.<sup>19</sup> Harley argues that this view of maps is fundamentally wrong:

The normal understanding is that we control the map: but through its internal power or logic the map also controls us. We are prisoners in its spatial matrix. An analogy can be drawn between what happens to our data in the cartographers’ hands and what happens to people in the disciplinary institutions – prisons,



**Figure 6.** Places of death of Welsh immigrants to the United States, 1838 – 1850, derived from immigrant obituaries in Welsh-American religious periodicals (Map 1.3 in Anne Kelly Knowles, *Calvinists Incorporated: Welsh Immigrants on Ohio's Industrial Frontier* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997], p. 26. © 1997 The University of Chicago. All rights reserved).

schools, armies, factories – described by Foucault; in both cases a process of normalisation occurs. Standardisation is the golden calf of ‘thematic’ cartography: compilation, generalisation, classification, formation into hierarchies must all be done according to standard principles. The result is a highly artificial image which limits our ability to engage in interpretative manoeuvre. Mapping is a game, almost a ritual, with its own set of rules. We learn to accept the results to become players at the chessboard of the map.<sup>20</sup>

I was trained, by Woodward and Conzen, to make maps in the “Wisconsin” style. Figure 6 is an image of my own imprisonment, a map of Welsh immigrant destinations from my first book, *Calvinists Incorporated*.<sup>21</sup> This map exemplifies the “frozen,” “vacuous and stultifying image[s]” that Harley found so unsatisfying. Such maps draw “a curtain across the landscape...shutting out the sense of place from our thoughts. They are a lexicon without people.”<sup>22</sup> Figures 7 and 8 show similar examples from my book *Mastering Iron*.<sup>23</sup> Harley’s essay has removed the scales from my eyes.





**Figure 7.** The route of Benjamin Smith Lyman as he gathered information on iron works in the South, March – July 1857 (Figure 7 in Anne Kelly Knowles, *Mastering Iron: The Struggle to Modernize an American Industry* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013], p. 29. © 2013 The University of Chicago. All rights reserved).

After believing for more than two decades that the Wisconsin school of cartography was the epitome of excellence, I now see the lifelessness of these maps.

Harley's *cri de coeur* ends with a bow to Denis Wood, who had pleaded "for a 'cartography of reality' that is 'humane, humanist, phenomenological, and phenomenalist'." "The obvious alternative" to dehumanized cartography, Harley concludes, "is a greater pluralism of cartographic expression...we need a narrative cartography that tells a story and portrays a process at the same time as it [reveals] the interconnectedness of humanity in space...we could try to make cartography exciting again."<sup>24</sup>

When GIS was being developed in the late twentieth century, its designers incorporated the rules laid down by academic cartographers, including Robinson and his protégé Barbara Bartz Petchenik.<sup>25</sup> Their criteria for proper, scientific map design are embedded in the default settings of cartographic "functionality" in ArcGIS and many other GIS programs. One can change the

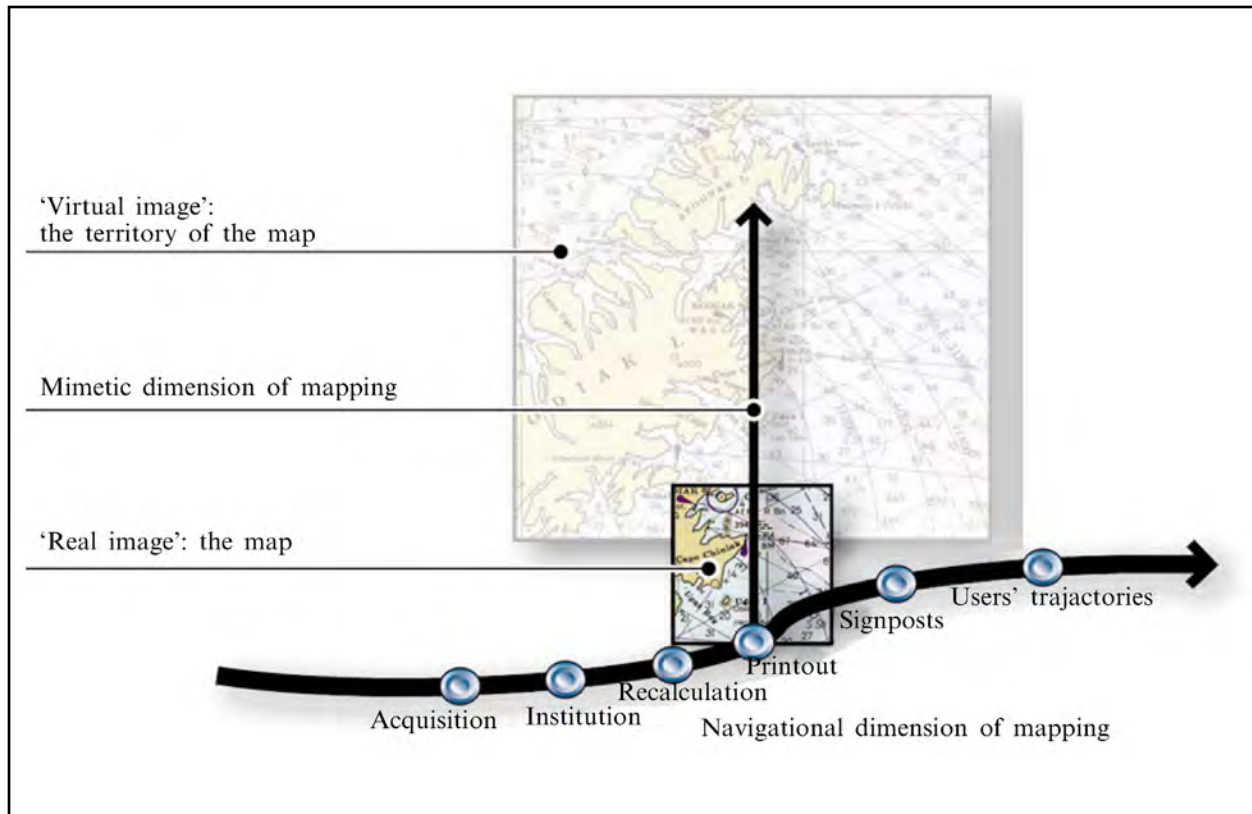


**Figure 8.** Map showing the market connections between pig iron producers and manufacturers, according to J. Peter Lesley's *The Iron Manufacturer's Guide* (1859) (Figure 16 in Knowles, *Mastering Iron*, p. 52. © 2013 The University of Chicago. All rights reserved).

settings, but how many of us do? Geographers know what it means when someone complains about the stilted, abstract quality of "GIS maps." Because today's student cartographers, and many professionals, are trained in GIS, it is all the more incumbent upon those of us who are conceiving of maps not to abdicate our creative responsibility when we collaborate with cartographers.

It is much easier to identify what is lacking in maps of human experience than it is to find better modes of geographic representation. One example can stand for many. In a recent article,



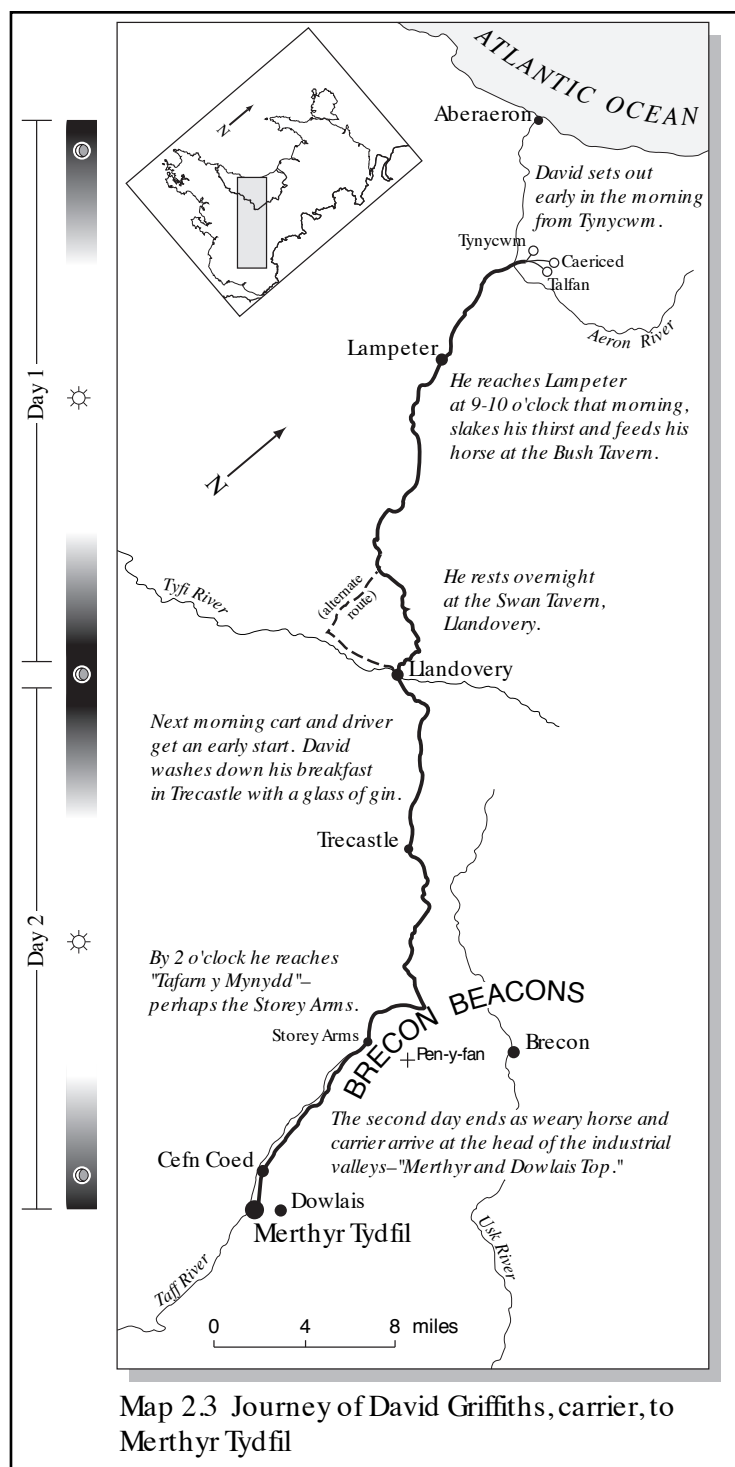


**Figure 9.** “Two Orthogonal Representations of the Mapping Impulse” (Figure 1 in Valérie November, Eduardo Camacho-Hübner, and Bruno Latour, “Entering Risky Territory: Space in the Age of Digital Navigation,” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28, no. 4 (2010), pp. 581-99, Pion Ltd., London. Figure on p. 587).

Valérie November, Eduardo Camacho-Hübner, and Bruno Latour echo Harley’s complaint against the assumptions of modernist cartography in the hands of geographers. “When social scientists collaborate with geographers,” they write, “they are often puzzled by the weight given by their colleagues to the base map, upon which they are asked to project their own objects as if they had to add a more superficial layer to a more basic one.” These scholars argue that mimetic maps—those that embody the “cascades of inscriptions” that make scientific cartography seem to represent reality—are actually the farthest from reality because they freeze time, and thus deny the flux and change that characterize life. Like Harley, these authors crave a kind of mapping that is mobile and responsive, capable of conveying the complexity of life.<sup>26</sup> Their own figures, however, lack these qualities; they are pale, fixed diagrams that I have yet to understand (figure 9).

Almost none of us can master all three of the major modes of geographic expression, namely empirical writing, theoretical writing, and geovisualization. November and her co-authors are exceptional among theorists for attempting to visualize their ideas. So far as I know, Harley never did this in his theoretical papers; he left mapping behind when he turned to critique the history of cartography. Meinig described his interpretive concepts in words, but needed an artist-cartographer to render them visually. If historical geographers cannot be both literary and visual artists, what are we to do?

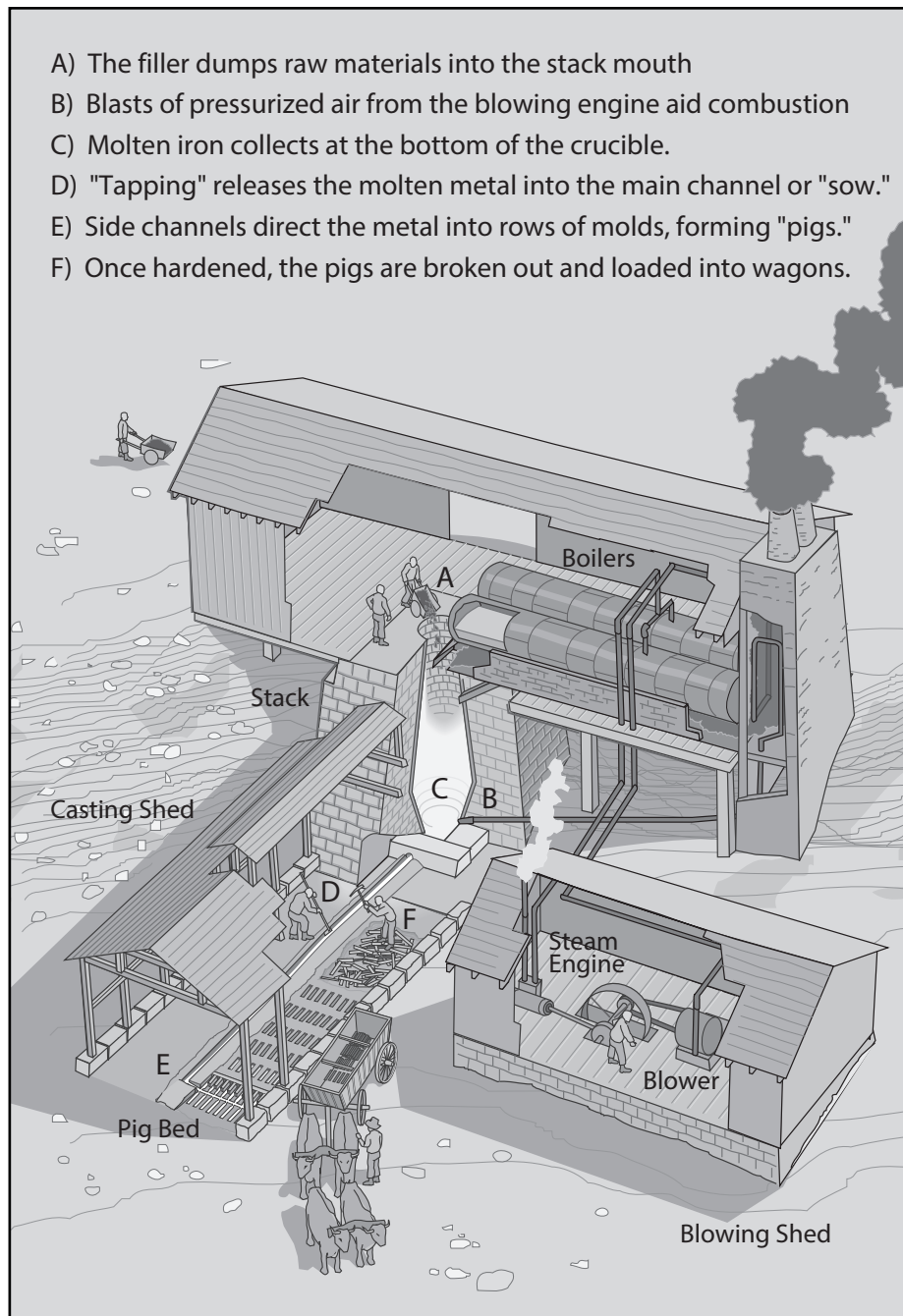
The answer is: *collaborate*. Historical geographers *have* produced exciting, creative, humane cartography when they have had both powerful ideas and imaginative, talented cartographers



**Figure 10a.** A map of the journey of David Griffiths to Merthyr Tydfil to sell farm goods in the city, based on a Welsh folk song (Map 2.3 in Knowles, *Calvinists Incorporated*, p. 70. © 1997 The University of Chicago. All rights reserved).

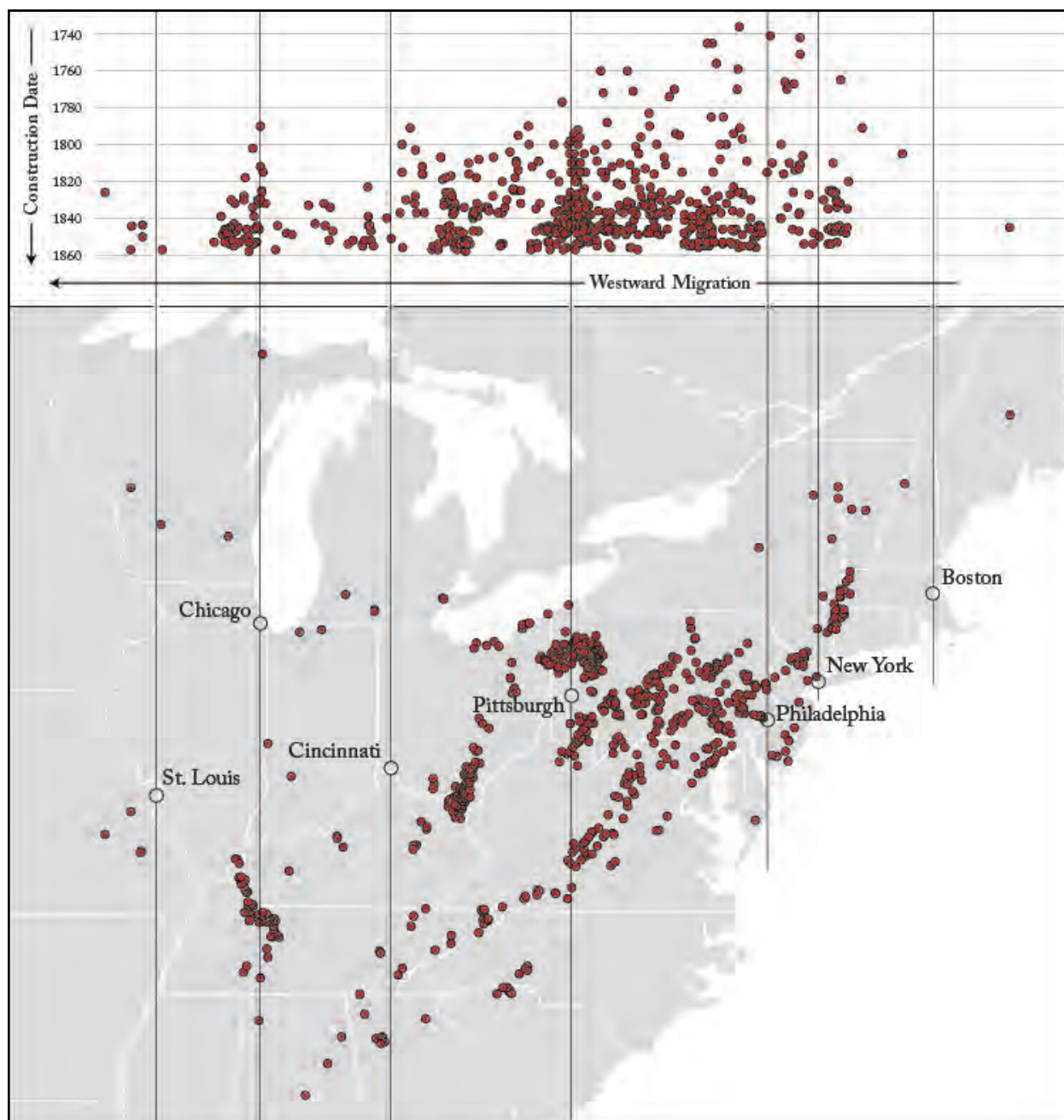
and graphic artists as collaborators. Collaboration is much more than handing off one's sketches to a technician. It is a process of intellectual exchange that engages the creative abilities of all parties. The more unusual and complex one's ideas are, the more necessary collaboration may be.





**Figure 10b.** A cut-away view of a typical blast furnace in operation, drawn by Tom Willcockson (Figure 4.1 in Knowles, *Calvinists Incorporated*, p. 169. © 1997 The University of Chicago. All rights reserved).

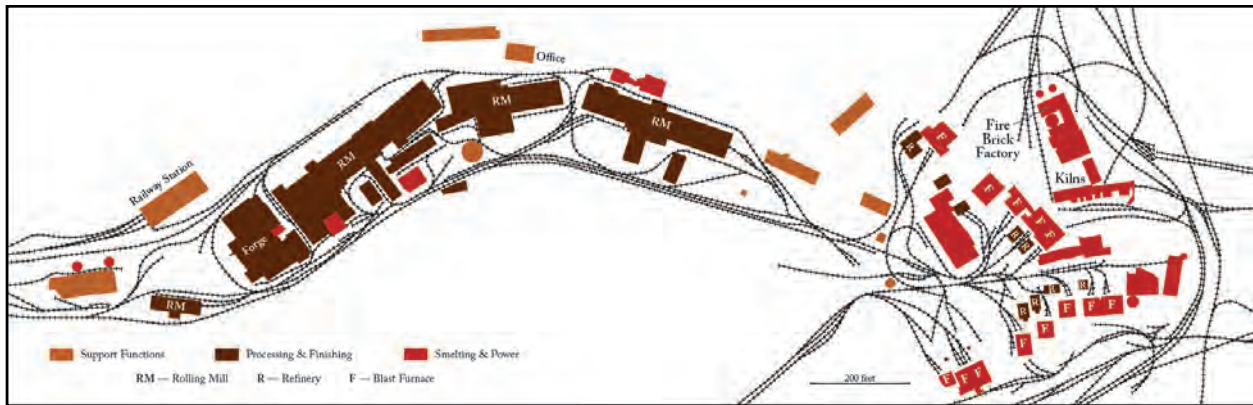
I mentioned at the beginning that I learned a way of working from Michael Conzen. While he did show me how to work with cartographers, collaboration had been my professional mode of operation from college, when I was a cub journalist with the daily student newspaper at Duke University. All of my work in publishing involved collaboration of some kind. Good books are created by many talented people. In graduate school, I sought out gifted student cartographers to help me create my more unusual maps, such as Figures 10a and 10b. The map on the left, based on a Welsh folk song, was drawn by Sara Arscott for my dissertation. The drawing on the right, a cut-away view of a blast furnace, was drawn by Tom Wilcockson, a historical illustrator, for *Calvinists Incorporated*.



**Figure 11.** The simultaneous concentration of iron works in certain localized regions and movement of the industry west and south during the early 19th century (Figure 9 in Knowles, *Mastering Iron*, p. 35. © 2013 The University of Chicago. All rights reserved).

Geography undergraduate students at Middlebury College have been my collaborators in geovisualization for the last decade. Garrott Kuzzy created the image in Figure 11 from my historical GIS database of the U.S. iron industry. The data documented that during the antebellum period, the iron industry moved westward while becoming concentrated in particular places, mostly in the East. I asked Garrott to find a way to display both trends in a single graphic. His solution was to plot iron companies' longitude on the graph above (with time reading from top to bottom), and then to connect the temporal distribution to geographic location on the map, below. I still marvel at his ingenuity.



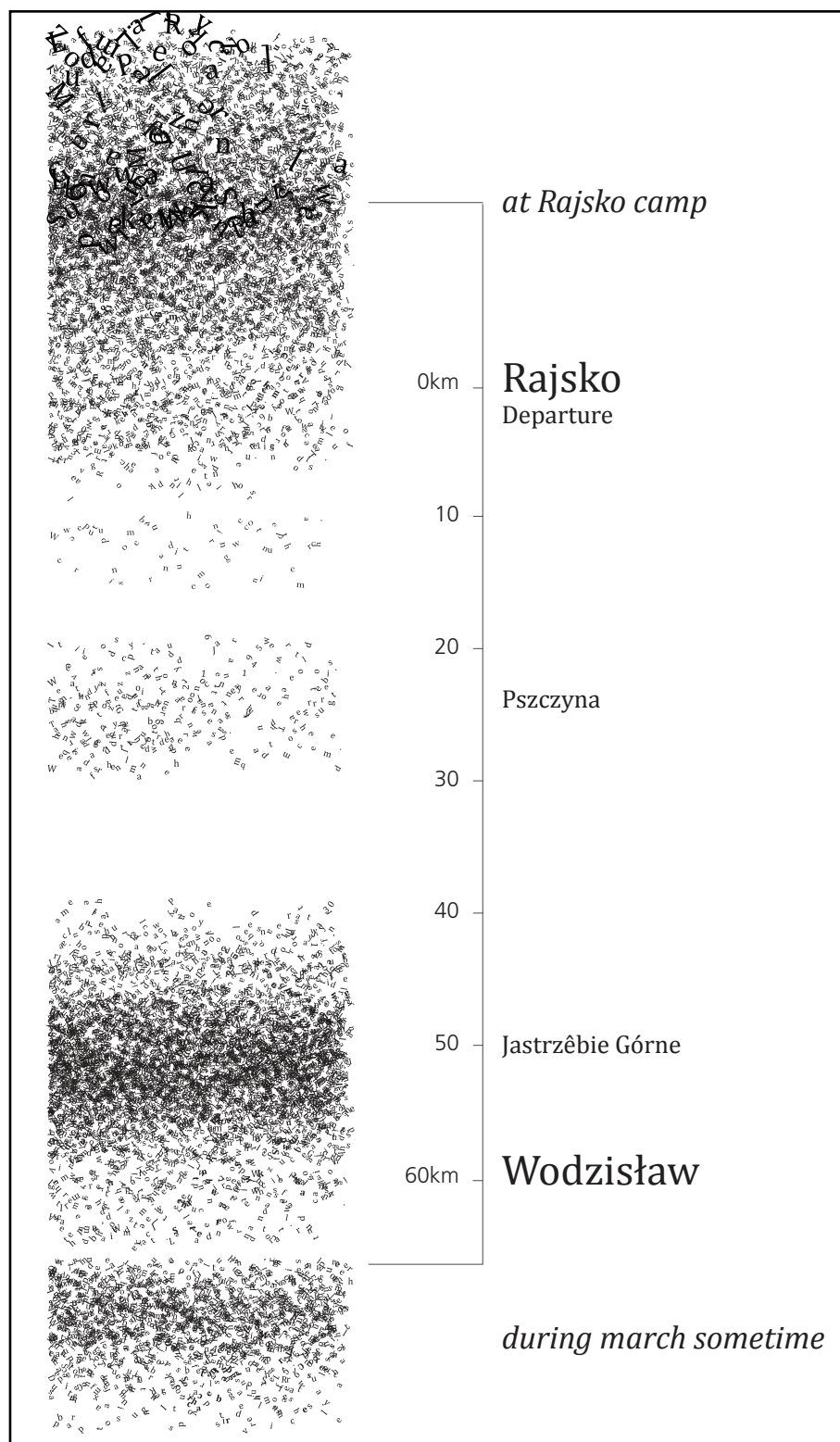


**Figure 12.** A diagrammatic view of the spatial organization of the Dowlais Iron Company Merthyr Tydfil, Wales, circa 1852 (Figure 41 in Knowles, *Mastering Iron*, pp. 116-17. © 2013 The University of Chicago. All rights reserved).

Chester Harvey, who drew most of the maps and diagrams in *Mastering Iron*, helped me express my geographic ideas many times. Figure 12 is our pared-down version of an 1851 British Ordnance Survey map of Merthyr Tydfil, Wales. Merthyr's iron companies were the envy of American entrepreneurs who wanted to replicate their low-cost, high-volume production in the United States. By stripping away the historical richness of the manuscript map to reveal the functional landscape of production, we highlighted the geographical efficiency of this large company's production system, which connected mines and quarries (just off the right side of the map) through smelting, refining, and shipping (off the left side of the map).

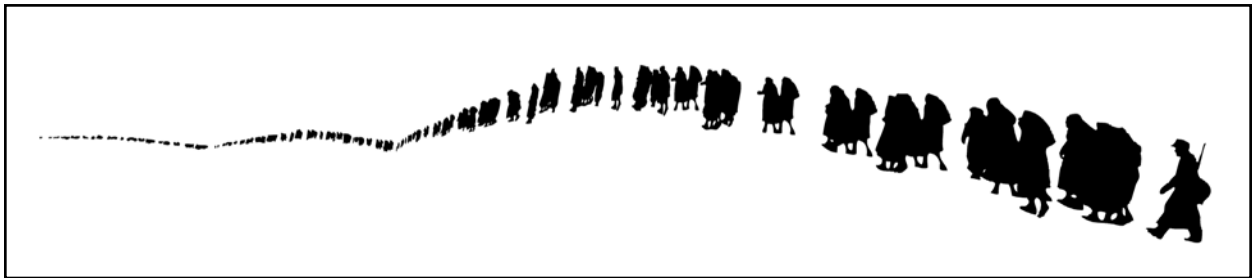
I could show many more examples of students' creativity, but my space is limited. My last examples come from the Holocaust Geographies project.<sup>27</sup> The case study of evacuations from Auschwitz by Simone Gigliotti, Marc Masurovsky, and Erik Steiner began with conventional mapping of evacuation routes. While this was useful information, it did not begin to represent evacuees' traumatic experiences as recorded in survivor testimonies. Well into the project, Erik Steiner, a superb cartographer and graphic artist, began experimenting with non-cartographic representation of the testimonial evidence. Figure 13 deconstructs seven women's post-war testimony into its constituent letters and locates them by the time and place to which they refer. This image reveals striking gaps of silence. Erik also tried figurative representations, most movingly in a poetic image of an evacuation (Figure 14) that captures the snows of Poland in January, the profound isolation and disorientation of evacuees, the mobile community of the marching column, and the seeming endlessness of the journey.

Each of these examples came from wrestling with complex historical information that refused to be mapped politely. One of my students showed me just how valuable it can be to confront the inadequacies of conventional mapping by thinking better about what one really wants to visualize in historical evidence. The student, Hannah Day, was in my senior research seminar on the historical geography of the Holocaust. She became fascinated by the massive two-volume diary of Victor Klemperer, a secular Jew who survived the Holocaust and the bombings of his native Dresden. Hannah wanted to map Klemperer's experiences as recorded in his diary. She began conventionally with a basemap of 1944 Dresden, to which she added short quotations from Klemperer's diary at the locations to which they refer. Hannah was dissatisfied with this approach. It had no feeling. What she and I finally came up with was an emotional diagram structured by time rather than place (Figure 15). Time runs from left to right along the horizontal axis. The vertical axis rises above the centerpoint according to the degree of transcendence that

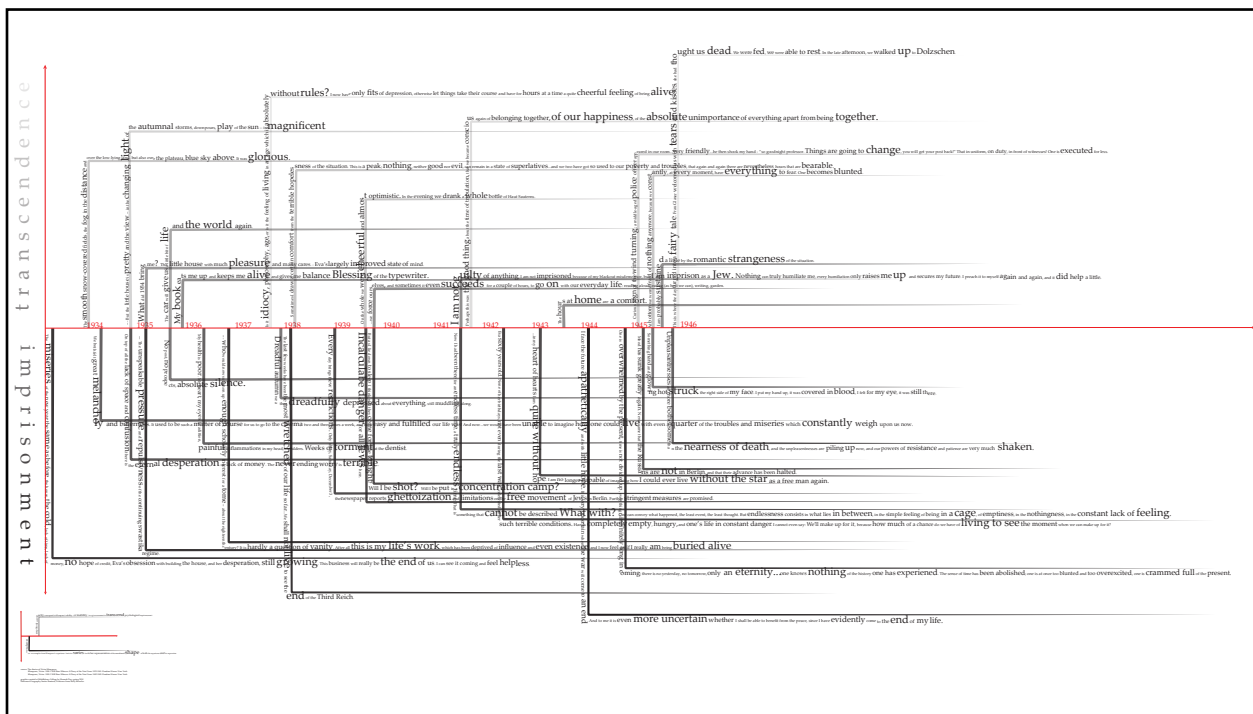


**Figure 13.** “Terrain of Encoded Memories,” by Erik B. Steiner. Figure from Simone Gigliotti, Marc J. Masurovsky, and Erik Steiner, “From the Camp to the Road: Representing the Evacuations from Auschwitz, January 1945,” in Anne Kelly Knowles, Tim Cole, and Alberto Giordano, eds., *Geographies of the Holocaust* (Indianapolis: University of Indiana Press, 2014), 216. By permission of Erik B. Steiner.





**Figure 14.** A sketch of evacuees from Auschwitz, by Erik B. Steiner. By permission.



**Figure 15.** Hannah Day's graphic representation of Victor Klemperer's emotional experience during WWII, as recorded in his diary. By permission.

Klemperer felt in moments represented by quotations that rise above the timeline, or the depth of imprisonment and despair he felt at moments that descend below the line. The final image makes me think of an organ concerto, with deepening bass chords as conditions worsened but also notes of pleasure and joy, as when he found his wife alive after a bombing raid, was able to get food, or escaped the city for a day in the countryside.

### What we have to offer as visual artisans

As spatial and visual thinkers, historical geographers have so much to offer scholarship. We are adept at spatial thinking and capable of creative visualization that our colleagues in other disciplines envy and are eager to learn.

In the Digital Humanities, literary and historical scholars are eagerly using digital visualization tools that reveal relational patterns, including spatial patterns, in new ways that can be very stimulating. The intellectual substance of some of this work is yet to be determined, but I am convinced of its value in generating new questions and engaging new bodies of evidence. What I see lacking in Digital Humanists' embrace of visual technologies is precisely the critical awareness that Harley urges us to exercise. Just as historical geographers have tended to be oblivious of the cartographic illusion that maps mirror reality, those of us who are now using GIS, virtual reality, NVivo, and the many other tools of geo- and socio-visualization should resist the seductive impression that the images generated by computer programs are real.

It is never too late to learn how to think critically about visual representation. Where I part company with more theoretically driven cultural and historical geographers is that I believe we must continue to make visual images. At the same time, we must also critique our own efforts. My work has benefited enormously from critical engagement with the visual craft of my students, fellow scholars, and cartographers who have dared to break the mold of the Wisconsin school. I hope we might all become more daring, and more human, in our efforts to represent our understanding of the past.

### NOTES

- 1 James A. Henretta, et al., *America's History* (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey Press, 1987): Maps 2.2, 2.4, and 6.2.
- 2 I met Harley during my last months working for Dorsey Press. When I acquired David Buisseret's book manuscript *From Sea Charts to Satellite Images* for the Press, Buisseret suggested that I ask Harley to write an introduction. He agreed to meet me during one of his regular visits to the University of Wisconsin-Madison. I vividly remember his eagle-sharp gaze when I walked into the long, narrow office under the eaves of Science Hall where he sat tipped back in a swivel office chair. A formidable man, but generous. His typically perceptive introductory essay was one of the last pieces he wrote before he died in 1991. *Sea Charts* was picked up by University of Chicago Press when Dorsey Press was sold by its parent company, Richard D. Irwin; the book was published in 1990.
- 3 J. B. Harley and David Woodward, eds., *Cartography in Prehistoric, Ancient, and Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean*, vol. 1 of *The History of Cartography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); R. Cole Harris, ed., *Historical Atlas of Canada*, vol. 1, *From the Beginning to 1800* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987); D. W. Meinig, *Atlantic America, 1492 – 1800*, vol. 1, *The Shaping of America: A Geographical Perspective on 500 Years of History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987).
- 4 See, for example, James E. Vance, Jr.'s review in *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 77, no.3 (1987): 479 – 80 and James Axtell's review in *William and Mary Quarterly* 45, no.1 (1988): 173 – 75. For a contrary view, see Rowland Berthoff's critique of Meinig's



- spatial thinking as inadequate to explain the character of American life, economy, and national identity, in *Journal of Southern History* 53, no.4 (1987): 645 – 646.
- 5 Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, vol. 1, trans. Siân Reynolds, abridged edition (New York: Harper & Row, 1992), 122.
  - 6 This was historian Bernard Bailyn's memorable critique of my mapping of the American iron industry at a "Geography and Atlantic History" workshop at Harvard, 4 November 2006. I was unable to persuade Bailyn that mapping could be interpretive, not merely descriptive. He is not alone.
  - 7 Meinig's capsule diagrams of spatial interactions have the universal quality and specificity of architect Christopher Alexander's conceptualizations of types of human living and working spaces in *A Pattern Language: Towns, Buildings, Construction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977).
  - 8 Bruno Latour, *Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers Through Society* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988).
  - 9 For an elegant argument about the lack of geographic knowledge of the interior among British military forces, see Stephen J. Hornsby, *Surveyors of Empire: Samuel Holland, J. F. W. Des Barres, and the Making of the Atlantic Neptune* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2011), chap. 5.
  - 10 D. W. Meinig, "Geography as an Art," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, new series 8, no.3 (1983): 314. Emphasis added.
  - 11 This almost casual approach was confirmed by Joseph Stoll, a Syracuse University cartographer who worked with Meinig as he was completing volume 4 of *The Shaping of America*; telephone interview with Joseph Stoll, 4 April 2014.
  - 12 Telephone interview with Marcia Harrington, 5 April 2014. Thanks to John Olson of the Syracuse University Cartography Lab for helping me find Ms. Harrington, who left the Lab many years ago to begin a new career.
  - 13 J. B. Harley, "Historical Geography and the Cartographic Illusion," *Journal of Historical Geography* 15, no.1 (1989): 80 – 91. This essay is not included in the collection edited by Paul Laxton, *The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001). Thanks to Stephen J. Hornsby for bringing this essay to my attention.
  - 14 Paul Laxton, "Harley, (John) Brian (1932–1991)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); online ed., May 2010 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/41115>, accessed 24 November 2014].
  - 15 There are many volumes. Between two covers, see H. C. Darby, *Domesday England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977). I see Darby's exhaustive, iterative mapping of the Domesday Book's data, and his uses of it to interpret medieval England, as a direct precursor to historical GIS. See Bruce M. S. Campbell, *English Seigniorial Agriculture 1250 – 1450* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), for a comprehensive but poorly designed mapping of the Domesday data with GIS.
  - 16 Harley, "Cartographic Illusion," 80.
  - 17 Harley's work as a book editor may have given him insights into the limitations of this process.
  - 18 Harley, "Cartographic Illusion," 83.
  - 19 Harley, "Cartographic Illusion," 85. Robinson, et al., *The Elements of Cartography*, went through several editions. Karen Reppen of Mapping Specialists gave me a copy of the 5th edition in 1984 to help prepare me for working on the maps in *America's History*. Robinson's history of cartography, which opens the book, is a fine distillation of the progressive (or

- Whig) view of increasingly scientific cartography championed by Norman J. W. Thrower in *Maps and Map: An Examination of Cartography in Relation to Culture and Civilization* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972) and later editions.
- 20 Harley, "Cartographic Illusion," 85.
  - 21 Anne Kelly Knowles, Map 1.3 in *Calvinists Incorporated: Welsh Immigrants on Ohio's Industrial Frontier* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 26.
  - 22 Harley, "Cartographic Illusion," 86.
  - 23 Anne Kelly Knowles, Figs. 7 and 16 in *Mastering Iron: The Struggle to Modernize an American Industry* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 29, 52.
  - 24 Harley, "Cartographic Illusion," 87-88.
  - 25 Arthur H. Robinson, *The Look of Maps: An Examination of Cartographic Design* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1952); Robinson and Barbara Bartz Petchenik, *The Nature of Maps: Essays Toward Understanding Maps and Mapping* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976).
  - 26 Valérie November, Eduardo Camacho-Hübner, and Bruno Latour, "Entering Risky Territory: Space in the Age of Digital Navigation," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28 (2010): 581 – 99.
  - 27 Anne Kelly Knowles, Tim Cole, and Alberto Giordano, eds., *Geographies of the Holocaust* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2014).



## INTRODUCTION TO SPECIAL ISSUE

### Historical Geographies of Ireland: Colonial Contexts and Postcolonial Legacies, Part 2

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Reviewing the *estschrift* for Willie Smyth,<sup>1</sup> Robin Butlin noted the focus of Irish historical geographers upon “the question of Ireland as a colony.”<sup>2</sup> Together with the half-dozen essays published last year in *Historical Geography* 41, this further dozen adds weight to this observation, not least by including a further substantial contribution from Willie Smyth himself. The conceptual and historical context for these works was outlined in an introductory essay for the first set of papers.<sup>3</sup> Here, I will briefly relate this current set back to the themes introduced in the earlier Introduction. The essay by Smyth and that by Cronin return us to the bloody conquest of Ireland and the subsequent making of new administrative and economic geographies to sustain the colonial order. Smyth notes that in his *Map-Making, Landscapes and Memory*, he had been able to exploit the voluminous English language materials of the colonial enterprise to evoke the patterns of the Gaelic society then placed under threat, of the English rule that undermined that older order, and of the Irish-English society that, under the most unequal and fraught of circumstances, took form in the aftermath of the conquest.<sup>4</sup> In reflecting upon that earlier work, Smyth remarks upon his relatively limited use of Irish language sources. In the present essay, he supplements his earlier work in this regard. In particular, he looks at attempts to reinvigorate as well as preserve Irish-language culture through compendious works that offered a digest of historical knowledge about pre-Conquest Ireland. Such works were also a plea that the oppressed Catholic majority in Ireland might get justice. Smyth argues that this renaissance of historical scholarship is likely to have influenced the rebels who rose up in 1641 against English rule. He then moves to the trauma of that rebellion and the decade of wars that ensued between the Irish and their English and Scots neighbors in Ireland. The Irish poetry of the period registers the unbearable horror of the interrelated destruction of a culture and a landscape.

Nessa Cronin takes up the story of the English re-settlement of large swathes of Ireland after the desolation and displacement produced by Oliver Cromwell’s suppression of the Confederate campaign of the 1640s and 1650s. There is now a substantial literature sustaining the claim that colonies often served as a laboratory where social and economic policies were first tried before being introduced back into the metropole.<sup>5</sup> Cronin relates the mapmaking work that William Petty did as part of the Down Survey in Ireland to his studies of the political arithmetic of the English state. Political Geography and Political Economy were twins. Cronin follows Foucault in highlighting the novelty of a governmentality that took “population” as its focus, but Cronin goes somewhat further than Foucault in suggesting that this governmentality was at first blush distinctly colonial.<sup>6</sup> With this genealogy, the English suppression of the Irish rebellions in the 1640s and 1650s becomes a key focus for the study of the conditions for the emergence of the modern state.

Norbert Elias drew attention to the making bourgeois of a ruling class as a long process of cultural innovation, a civilizing process.<sup>7</sup> Alongside the self-regulation by the elite, there was at various times the pursuit of respectability among the poor and the lower middle class.<sup>8</sup> There was also a more directed effort on the part of the ruling classes to inculcate in the poor that acceptance of the social order that would make them cooperative, if not docile subjects. David Nally has studied the Irish Famine from this perspective, emphasizing the opportunity for civilizing the poor that Victorian legislators and administrators found in the desperate circumstances of the starving millions.<sup>9</sup> In different ways, Loughheed and Beckingham take up these themes of the broader civilizing process. In the field of education, experiments were ventured in Ireland long before similar were attempted in Britain. Ireland was visited with a project for a state-funded and compulsory education system in the 1830s, something England would not see until the 1870s. Kevin Loughheed shows the importance of local circumstances in shaping the controversies over proselytizing that would ultimately end this novel effort at multi-denominational education.<sup>10</sup> David Beckingham studies the self-regulation of the Irish in Britain and the importance of temperance in this regard. He looks at the staging of Father Mathew's phenomenally successful campaign of pledge-taking. He also shows the ways that the nationalist agitation of Daniel O'Connell created circumstances that Mathew could exploit but which also imperiled his claim that his was a purely civilizational and not a political movement.

The complexity of the colonial political encounter is evident also in Carl Griffin's essay on the early reaction in Britain to the emerging Irish potato blight in 1845-7. He shows how Ireland was conceptualized as a problem; the Irish question. This strips colonial agency from the representation of the causes of the Famine, allowing the British to imagine their obligations to Ireland as no more than those of voluntary charity. In my chapter, I look at how, in response to the awful conclusion reached by many Irish people that the English seemed prepared to let hundreds of thousands of Irish people starve to death, Irish nationalists were driven to integrate their understanding of the economic and political dimensions of colonialism. The form of anticolonial nationalism that developed comprehended an utopian ambition that saw some Irish political thinkers conceptualize nationalism as a step towards social justice rather than as mere autonomy. After the trauma of the Famine, many British observers moved towards a racial understanding of the enduring difference of the Irish. Diarmid Finnegan remarks on the compatibility of racial reading of Irishness with a very wide range of politics, extending even to some versions of diasporic nationalism.

The diasporic dimension of Irish identities is well treated in essays by Mulligan and Jenkins. Fenianism was a resolutely diasporic movement with political events in Ireland, Britain and America influencing each other. Adrian Mulligan shows how international relations were implicated in Irish nationalism thereby. The United States offered citizenship to residents who rescinded earlier attachments. As a society of immigrants, it had to develop a novel form of citizenship that went beyond the absolute spaces of monarchs and subjects. Ultimately, Britain had to accede to the new world order. William Jenkins looks at the ethnic press and the cultivation of Irish heroes as a way that diasporic identities were forged. He shows how particular versions of diasporic Irishness were developed for and out of both the public and the covert practices of Fenianism.

The failure in Ireland of the Fenian rising of 1867, and in 1866 and 1870 of the Fenian raids from the United States into Canada, reshaped the mutual expectations of Irish nationalists from America, Britain and Ireland. The political energies of the Irish nationalists in Ireland were directed towards the land question and by the later part of the century towards constitutional reform and Home Rule. In this context, the British government renewed its attempts to bring the Irish to a more ready acceptance of their integration into the British polity. Arlene Crampsie



shows the ways that the reform of local government was offered a vehicle for making the Irish into citizens of an integrated British state. To a significant degree this worked and the new local authorities in Ireland did much to improve the lives of Irish residents with sanitary and other improvements. Of course, ultimately constitutional agitation was trumped by the insurrection of 1916 and the division of Ireland that was part of the settlement of 1921.

The postcolonial legacies of this division were an explicit focus of an art project, *Troubling Ireland*, which Bryonie Reid both participated in and here writes about. In particular, Reid explores the relations between history and identity, the ways that places interpellate people into traditions and with consequences that they may find deeply troubling. Nuala Johnson shows how troubled histories inflect projects of commemoration even where these are tied to an urban renewal presented as being of benefit to all parts of the community. The violence in Northern Ireland during the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s was part of the legacy of the division that came with qualified independence in 1921. The legacy of this recent period of violence and struggle structures even the commemoration an event such as the sinking of the Titanic in 1912. The new Titanic quarter in Belfast draws upon public fascination with the loss of this enormous ship on its maiden voyage. Yet these spaces of new urbanism remain in thrall to the legacies of colonial and postcolonial conflicts in ways that these essays in Irish historical geography can help us to appreciate.

## NOTES

- 1 Patrick J. Duffy and William Nolan (eds), *At the Anvil: Essay in Honour of William J. Smyth* (Dublin: Geography Publications, 2012).
- 2 Robin Butlin, "[Review of Duffy and Nolan](#), *At the Anvil*," *Journal of Historical Geography* 46 (2014): 129-130, 129.
- 3 Gerry Kearns, "[Irish Historical Geographies](#): Colonial Contexts and Postcolonial legacies," *Historical Geography* 41 (2013): 22-34.
- 4 William J. Smyth, *Map-Making, Landscapes and Memory: A Geography of Colonial and Early Modern Ireland, c. 1530-1750* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2007).
- 5 Paul Rabinow, *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1989).
- 6 Michel Foucault, "Governmentality" [1979], trans. Rosi Braidotti, in Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller (eds) *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 87-104.
- 7 Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process, Vol.II. State Formation and Civilization*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Oxford: Blackwell, 1982 [1939]).
- 8 Peter Bailey, "'Will the Real Bill Banks Please Stand up?' Towards a Role Analysis of Mid-Victorian Working-Class Respectability," *Journal of Social History* 12, no. 3 (1979): 336-353.
- 9 David Nally, *Human Encumbrances: Political Violence and the Great Irish Famine* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2011).
- 10 With consequences that continue to the present day: Gerry Kearns and David Meredith, "Spatial Justice and Primary Education," in Gerry Kearns, David Meredith, and John Morrissey (eds) *Spatial Justice and the Irish Crisis* (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2014), 177-206.

# Towards a Traumatic Geography of Ireland 1530-1760 and Beyond: the Evidence of Irish Language Texts

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**ABSTRACT:** Many nations and groups have experienced forms of trauma, which mark their memories for a very long time, changing their future identities in very powerful ways. In Ireland, the Protestant settlers experienced such trauma during and after the 1641 Rising/Rebellion. Their memories of these awful events were recorded in the many volumes of the government-commissioned 1641 Depositions and were perpetuated in key official writings and by the state in formal annual church ceremonies. No comparable body of evidence was commissioned to record the many subsequent murders and subjugation of the Catholic Irish at the hands of government forces and local Protestant militias. One must turn to the poems and prose texts in the Irish language to discover the recollection of these and related sufferings of the Catholic Irish. Four such key Irish language texts are examined here: The Annals of the Four Masters, Keating's *The History of Ireland*, *Five Seventeenth Century Political Poems*, and *An Duanaire 1600-1900: Poems of the Dispossessed*. Major themes explored are the devastating geographies of conquest and English language domination; the forging of new Irish identities in the face of the New English hegemony; the emergence of a history and a literature in the Irish language which repudiates an imperialist ideology and imagines and defines a new national community; and the significance of a poetic literature which describes a devastated culture and ravaged silent landscapes which would long struggle to recover. However, by the mid-eighteenth century, some Irish poetry combines older notions of sovereignty with a forward-looking, democratic drive for justice and equality. In conclusion, the many different forms of adaptation by the Catholic Irish to their subjugated, traumatic state are summarized.

In the book *Map-making, Landscapes and Memory: The Geography of Colonial and Early Modern Ireland c.1530-1750*, I referenced the avalanche of English-language documentation on Ireland in comparison with Irish-language evidence.<sup>1</sup> Phenomenal survey information in English allows one to map Ireland intimately over this period—but also noted was the neglect by Irish geographers of the significant corpus of materials in the Irish language. In finishing the book, I realized I may not have done justice to the insights such sources give on contemporary Irish life, and in particular on the traumatic effects of the English conquest on the Irish psyche. So when Gerry Kearns issued this general invitation, an opportunity arose to merge these two streams—to pay greater attention to the insights to be gained from Irish-language sources in an exploration of the geography of the pain of conquest and the trauma that followed. In writing traumatic geographies, I am in particular reflecting on how writers in the Irish language, in their poetry, annals, prose histories and topographies represented and coped with what was happening to Ireland over this period.

There is a vast literature on culture, trauma and conflict and coping with such processes and events. Duran and Duran define historical trauma more precisely as post-colonial psychology. In order for it to exist, colonialism must have occurred and there is likely to be a continuing aspect to the colonial trauma, namely psychological, physical, social and cultural consequences

and ramifications in the aftermath of the systematic subjugation of a society by a colonizing culture.<sup>2</sup> In traumatic stress literature, loss may refer to institutional violence—the attack on and removal of values, beliefs and material items of a culture including sacred buildings, mansions and properties. But it is more commonly associated with the loss of person(s) who have been killed or have died. Loss and death are especially associated with war, forced migration and relocation, slavery or servitude, starvation or even genocide.

Many nations and groups have experienced forms of trauma that become salient elements in their consciousness and ongoing behaviors. Traumatic events and experiences leave indelible marks upon such groups' consciousness, marking their memories for a very long time and changing their future identities in fundamental and powerful ways.<sup>3</sup> National and cultural trauma, therefore, requires a perspective that crosses back and forth over time and space whether the peoples are Irish, African- and Native-Americans, Armenian, Cambodian, Jewish, Palestinian, Syrian, or Vietnamese. The list is a very long one.

The most significant documents in the English language dealing with trauma in this period are the thirty-three volumes of the 1641 Depositions. Commissioned by the colonial administration in Ireland to collect formal statements from settlers traumatized by violent attacks from the Irish, they document the terror experienced by the Protestant settlers at the beginning of the 1641 rising/rebellion, when many were murdered and others driven from their homes. These depositions, together with propagandist use made of them by key officials and writers like Henry Jones and Sir John Temple, exerted a profound, long-term effect on the collective memory of the Protestant Irish—a memory reinforced by the colonial state in annual, formal church ceremonies.<sup>4</sup> No comparable body of evidence was commissioned to record the many subsequent murders the Catholic Irish suffered at the hands of government forces and local Protestant militias. Rather, the recollection of these events and many others is embedded in the Irish poems and prose-texts which are the subject of this paper. The processes by which such collective memories were transmitted across the generations were many, but they certainly involved informal group sessions of poetry, music and song then so central (and still critical) to Irish culture. A well-known song-poem, *Cill Cais*, typifies this tradition:

*Cad a dhéanfaimíd feasta gan adhmhad?  
Tá deireadh na gcoillte ar lár;  
níl trácht ar Chill Chais ná a teaghlach  
is ní bainfear a cling go bráth.  
An áit úd a gconáíodh an deigh-bhean  
fuair gradam is meidhir thar mhnáibh  
bhíodh iarlaí ag tarraingt thar toinn ann  
is an t-aifreann binn á rá*

(What shall we do for timber?  
the last of the woods is down.  
There is no talk of Kilcash or the Butlers  
and the bell of the house is gone.  
The home-place where that lady waited  
who shamed all women by her grace  
when earls came sailing to greet her  
And Mass was said in the place.<sup>5</sup>)

This much-recited Irish poem of the mid to late eighteenth century mourns the disappearance of the woodlands of South Tipperary and, by inference, Ireland as a whole. In 1530, perhaps 18 to 20 percent of Ireland was wooded—by the 1730s, Ireland experienced a wood famine following on from the felling and rapid commercial exploitation of the woodlands by the new planter class. This poem, therefore, laments the passing of a familiar sylvan landscape—a landscape imbued with memories of the hunt, sport and relaxation generally, as well as memories of the woodland as a crucial resource for all aspects of living and farming. In this case, the great trees of the wood are also a metaphor for the old ruling family of the Butlers—an Old English family living in County Tipperary since the thirteenth century. The poem laments the loss of leadership and patronage once



provided by such distinguished ancestral families—with their European continental connections and their devotion to and defence of the Catholic tradition. Finally, the poem laments the loss of culture associated with the woods, the bell-tower of the great tower-house cum mansion and its chapel and people. The bell can be extended to mean an Irish “voice” or “voices” calling people to prayer, to work, to play. The poem evokes a bare, desolate and silent landscape that once was crowded with people chatting, sporting, loving and fighting in a familiar, warm and partly wooded land.

From an English settler’s perspective, the Irish landscape looked very different—a landscape cleared of woodland meant a landscape cleared for victory. The stumps of the trees represented a new field won for farming: where the conquered (perhaps ruined) tower-house meant a defensible space. Here a new English-style mansion-house could be built in a more secure, visible, enclosed and English-speaking world that did not threaten attacks or burnings. After conquest and boundary-making, a central aim of the settlers was to transform the habitat into an image of their own home place. For English officials and colonizers, the Irish woodlands had come to mean threat and danger, and the term “woodland Irish” was a synonym for the “wild Irish” who were to be broken, tamed and enframed.

In this paper a *brief* overview of the geographies of conquest in Ireland 1530-1603 will first be presented. Secondly, in a much lengthier section, how Irish writers over the period 1600 to 1760 represented the transformations of Ireland—and the traumatic consequences for the Catholic Irish and the Irish language—will be explored. Four Irish language texts are judged central to this task: *Annála Ríogtacht Éireann* (*The Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland*); *Fóras Feasa ar Éirinn* (*The History of Ireland*); *Five Seventeenth Century Political Poems* and *An Duanaire 1600-1900: Poems of the Disposessed*.<sup>6</sup> The first three texts were originally written in the seventeenth century. *Poems of the Disposessed*, in contrast, is the justly acclaimed—albeit retrospective—Irish poetry collection from 1600 to 1900, compiled by two distinguished modern scholar/poets, Seán ó Tuama and Thomas Kinsella. Thirdly and *briefly*, a preliminary sketch or path-analysis of the national and cultural trauma experienced by the Catholic Irish over the whole period will be presented as well as a summary of the strategies for survival that these Irish adopted in the face of conquest, plantations and the construction of Ireland—not as a separate kingdom—but as an English colony.

### The geographies of conquest

In *Map-making, Landscapes and Memory*, the story was recounted of how English mapping of Ireland created an English-language Ireland—an Ireland as understood from a colonizing English perspective where, for example, *all* the placenames are mapped and anglicized for the first time and in the process shorn of their meaning. The maps—used for conquest and colonization—were only a part of the wider discourse on colonialism. It was the numerous English-language texts, reports on the tours of duty and actions/performances of New English ruling officials, the compositions, surveys, inquisitions and views that made Ireland not only visible but legible and governable from an English point of view. Cartographic narratives, epitomized by, for example, Edmund Spenser’s *View of the State of Ireland* show this tight interweaving between colonial narratives and practices.<sup>7</sup>

There is not space to pursue these matters here except to note—as Patricia Palmer has so eloquently detailed—that after c.1540 the New English did not recognize the existence of the Irish language, then the language of 85 to 90 percent of the people and whose written forms in literature had been for centuries and were still to be the main expression of Irish life until the nineteenth century.<sup>8</sup> Despite the many encounters, exchanges, and negotiations between the English and the Irish, the use of the Irish language is air-brushed from all those accounts. In the literature of the English conquest, the sound of voices speaking Irish is scarcely heard at all. Irish is blanked out—

it is deemed not to exist yet is strongly legislated against.<sup>9</sup> The New English, therefore, repress linguistic differences, declining to recognize, utilize or investigate the “other” language. Rather, the elite spokespeople of the Irish—brehons, clergy, lords, poets, historians and topographers—are to be either eradicated or assimilated. After Henry VIII is declared King of Ireland in 1541, the Tudor English sought to treat Ireland as an extension of their domestic space—a border province in revolt from a central government rather than a separate polity resisting annexation. As Palmer argues, an autonomous literature and rich, foreign tongue is heard as a dissident patois—as an outlandish tongue.<sup>10</sup> There is a deliberate policy of rendering a very vociferous and contending culture inarticulate. So the maps and the texts illuminate an English-speaking Ireland and occlude Irish-speaking and Irish-writing worlds (and continued to do so all through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries).

This strategy of non-recognition, therefore, forced the Irish elite to negotiate in the English language—as they became bilingual or trilingual. I shall return to this point at the end of the paper—when by the mid-eighteenth century the Irish turn to the English language either to assimilate to, or use English as a weapon of protest and resistance against, the metropolitan culture. In the meantime, it is useful to return to not only the woodland themes but also the linguistic fastnesses that the English conquerors and colonizers faced—the constant need for translations and the inevitable misunderstandings, misrepresentations and damaging incomprehensions that inevitably flowed from these multifaceted and labyrinthine encounters. The New English policy of anglicization involved a military, political, settlement and linguistic conquest. The word and the sword were to march together. Tudor England would insist on a uniformity of law and language (English) and religion (Protestant) in Ireland.

In “The escalation of violence in sixteenth century Ireland,” David Edwards writes the following:

Atrocity punctuates the history of sixteenth century Ireland. Countrywide from the time of the Kildare rebellion [1534-40] until the end of the Nine Years War [1603], there was a tendency for military and political conflict to spiral wildly out of control. Combatants committed the worst excesses: multiple murders, summary executions, the mass slaughter of unarmed civilians (women and children included), dismemberment, even deliberate war-induced famines all became widespread in the course of one of the bloodiest and nastiest episodes of Irish history. Large-scale group killings, or massacres, occurred in many places, at Maynooth (1535) Belfast (1574), Rathlin Island (1575), Mullagh-mast (1577), Smerwick (1580) and Dunboy (1602), to name just some of the most notorious instances.<sup>11</sup>

As this list of massacres indicates, levels of violence appear to have escalated as the century advances, with conditions especially bad from the 1570s. The killings climaxed at the century’s end with the systematic scorched-earth operations carried out by the forces of the English Tudor monarchy before and after the battle of Kinsale (1601). As those responsible intended, the Irish population was starved and terrorized into submission. Many thousands died and much of the country was destroyed and made wasteland. In the words of historian David Quinn, when peace came at last, in March 1603, it was “the peace of death and exhaustion.”<sup>12</sup> John McGurk adds: “It may well be concluded that the post-Kinsale period in Ulster, the putting down of the fifteen-month resistance movement was carried out with unprecedented violence against non-combatants, clergy, women and children who traditionally were immune in warfare.”<sup>13</sup> In the putting down of the earlier Desmond rising/rebellion (1579-83), historians have estimated that at least fifty thousand people died of battle, plague and famine. I estimate at least one-eighth of

Munster perished. It is likely that at the very minimum another fifty thousand died in the Nine Year Ulster-centered war (1594-1603) and probably many more.

Up to 1603, the New English had to use interpreters—hidden from view in the accounts—to deal with the insurgent Irish. After 1603, and the total conquest and shiring of the country and the extension of English common law over the land, the English administrators were mainly talking to themselves.<sup>14</sup> The Irish language was finally excluded from political and economic power. The Gaelic lords were defeated and some were in exile. The Old English—the descendants of medieval settlers—were marginalized. The New English had gained full military, political, economic and linguistic control.

Irish poetry and its bardic poets eventually realized this. It is very important to understand the role and status of the bardic poet in pre-plantation Irish society. They were a hereditary professional caste who travelled widely in their provinces or island-wide (and to Scotland); they were wealthy landowners; they were key counsellors/politicians to their lords: they were negotiators/ambassadors on the latter's behalf. They were not only composers of elaborate praise-poems for their patrons but also wrote political poetry either advising the lords to accommodate themselves to New English legal requirements or as the sixteenth century moved on, increasingly admonishing their lords to defend their territories and that of Ireland against what they describe as the "heretic foreigner/invader." Indeed their poetic-cum-political functions—if not their ideology—were not that different from the roles that an Edmund Spenser or a John Milton played in an English society and polity.<sup>15</sup>

But after 1603 there was little security for the Irish learned classes and their Irish language except in those few regions where Irish-speaking lords and patrons remained as landowners. I have a suspicion that there is a regional geography to variations in poetic feeling. At the turn of the seventeenth century, I think the most perceptive poets of trauma and doom were then the Ulster poets in the north of Ireland. In Cromwellian and post-Cromwellian times (1640s onwards), it was the Munster poets in the south of Ireland who were most universally and most eloquent about the defeat of the Irish. Ulster poets were particularly sensitive to the beginning of the great silence that was to envelop the Irish language—trying to express a psychic loss that would be literally unspeakable. The imagery used by some of their poets is magnificent. An Ulster poet describes his desolation, as he drifts on a rising tide of English, hearing his words reduced to the lonely call of seabirds:

*Mé an murdhuchan  
An mhuir Goill*

(I am the guillemot  
English is the sea.<sup>16</sup>)

The tide might have been going out for Irish and rising for English—but there was a very complicated story still to unfold. The first half of the seventeenth century saw a very strong counter-cultural movement—a necessary counter-discourse to the burgeoning English propaganda texts in and about Ireland. However, the Irish then appeared to be somewhat more successful in opposing a cultural conquest than they were in resisting a territorial and legal conquest.

### **Writing traumatic geographies and histories**

The first half of the seventeenth century saw a great blossoming of materials written in Irish and Latin in poetry, prose, religious texts, annals and a number of histories-cum-geographies of Ireland. Artists are often most expressive when their society and culture are most stressed, in crisis and/or undergoing tremendous change. This blossoming of literary texts in the Irish language also reflected that scattering of Irish clergy, soldiers, merchants and other professionals



across Europe. This in turn saw a radical Europeanization and renewal of Irish literature both stylistically and thematically. Two of the most significant works emerging from this period—both written in the 1630s—are Seatrúin Céitinn's (his name in English is Geoffrey Keating) *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn* (loosely translated as *The History of Ireland* (to c.1200));<sup>17</sup> and *Annála Ríoghachta Éireann: The Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland*.<sup>18</sup> Now known as *The Annals of the Four Masters*, its leading compiler was Micheál O Cléirigh, a Franciscan cleric from Co. Donegal. When printed, two centuries later (complete with an English translation and commentary by the great Irish scholar, John O'Donovan), the Annals came to seven large volumes. *Annála Ríoghachta Éireann* was not the first use of the term 'Kingdom of Ireland.' But as Brendán Ó Buachalla emphasizes, its compilers—known as the "Four Masters"—institutionalized the term, thus stressing that Ireland was a single political entity (albeit still loyal to a Stuart king).<sup>19</sup> All previous annals had been anchored on provinces—as with the annals of Ulster, the annals of Clonmacnoise for Connaught and the midland region, and the annals of Inisfallen for Munster. *Annála Ríoghachta* however, was an inclusive historical record of the island as a whole.

The impetus for this eleven year (1625-36) investment in making as complete a collection of all existing manuscripts relating to Irish history and its antiquities—ostensibly from prehistoric/mythological times but actually reliable from about 1500 BP (500 AD)—came from the Franciscan College at Leuven/Louvain in modern Belgium (then part of the Spanish Netherlands). Hugh Ward, the Head of St. Anthony's College there, instructed Micheál O Cléirigh to go to Ireland to gather from all the scholars and learned centers across the country, these ancient annals, both secular and ecclesiastical. Ó Cléirigh collected every shred of evidence he could find including the history of the Irish saints, kings, bishops; he collected genealogies, other annals and all the prose and poetry he could recover. Impressed by parallel work of retrieval going on across Western Europe as national histories and national church histories were being compiled, as was then happening in the Low Countries, Ó Cléirigh moved around Ireland from one Franciscan house to another, doing his fieldwork in the summer and writing up in winter.<sup>20</sup> Under the patronage of a number of Gaelic lords who accepted James I of England as of original Gaelic stock, the Four Masters were writing within and accepted the existing political system. But this did not stop Micheál O Cléirigh and his contemporaries from criticizing what they saw as the horrendous acts of violence committed by the officers and forces of the same king or his predecessors in Ireland.

There is disagreement as to whether this work was seen as a salvage operation so that the memory of Ireland's place in civilization would not be lost or as a confident statement of Ireland's national status. Some have described the Annals as a monument to a lost civilization now going down in the face of English aggression and colonization.<sup>21</sup> But the leading authority, Breandán Ó Buachalla argues that the Annals were not constructed with that attitude and mentality.<sup>22</sup> Rather the objective set out by its originators was to chart Ireland's history and geography in written form—in short to give Ireland back its status as a nation in the face of powerful English propaganda to the contrary. The authors, and its mentors, were well aware of the European intellectual logocentric view that a people without a history was not a nation and that it was not a history until it was a *written* one. So the compilers of the Annals, in Ó Buachalla's view, saw this endeavour as a prologue of the new life to come—as one of the foundation texts for the Irish nation, that is the Catholic Irish nation, which had then crystallized in the 1620s and 30s. Yet, in retrospect, the Annals do seem to represent the end of specific notions of time, space and culture in Ireland. They record the epic battles for sovereignty, which ended with the defeat of the Irish at the battle of Kinsale in 1601. They stumble on intermittently until 1616. Then silence.

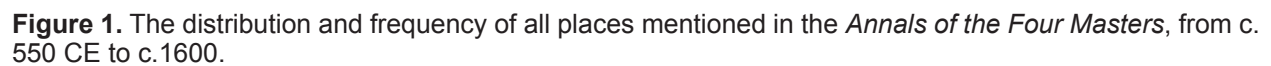
I have mapped the places named in the Annals and have found them to be remarkably comprehensive geographically—only two noticeable gaps, in the north-east and the extreme west and south-west (Figure 1). However, the annals are by no means comprehensive as to events such

as English military operations. Just under forty entries for such military exercises are recorded for the forty year period 1540-1579 whereas historian David Edwards, using an analysis of all state records as well, shows a total of 51 operations for half that period—the twenty year span from 1546 to 1565.<sup>23</sup> The Annals are essentially an Irish world view—for the most part they fail to note the work of the New English in building new fortifications or new urban or rural settlements. And they never mention the surveyors and map-makers as a category—these passed well underneath the radar of the clerical-cum-aristocratic-focussed annalists—as do the Irish merchant classes and the life of Irish cities and towns. The religious centers of Armagh and Clonmacnoise lead Dublin in the names index and Cork and Limerick tail behind a number of the key monastic/diocesan centers (Figure 1).

Nevertheless, the collapse of Ireland's relative cultural and political stability after the English Reformation i.e. post 1540 is dramatically highlighted in the Annals. As early as 1600 they reveal that the power of the lordships is reduced by the order of four-fifths. The most important lords and their sons have been executed or have gone into exile. Lay leadership is being eliminated. The representatives of the Catholic Church—most especially in relation to the ownership or control of church land—has been weakened considerably but not eliminated. However, in contrast to the later fifteenth century when there was still a powerful dynamic for monastic foundations across the country, all abbeys and monasteries are either in ruins or adapted for military-cum residential functions by the New English at the end of the sixteenth century (Table 1). English legislative and other attacks on Ireland's secular cultural leaders is also showing success but there are still a relatively vibrant if reduced group—confirming Brendaín Ó Buachalla's interpretation. But the role of the Irish judges, the *brehons*, has been radically reduced. By the 1600s, the spread of the English county and legal systems was now impacting across the country, accelerated by an Attorney General—Sir John Davies (another poet)—who saw conquest by law as an essential follow up to the military subjugation of the country.<sup>24</sup> Some Irish intellectuals—both lawyers and poets—were already assimilating to the new regime. Fanon noted that this happens in most colonial contexts.<sup>25</sup>

Perhaps the most dramatic evidence emerging from the Annals is the phenomenal intensification of English military operations over the second half of the sixteenth century. Yet it is likely the Annals are only documenting about 40% of the total. The Annals record eleven instances of the killing of non-combatants in the field over the second half of the sixteenth century.<sup>26</sup> In *Age of Atrocity*, David Edwards has documented in far greater detail the intensive use of state terror over this period.<sup>27</sup>

The use of the Irish language in the Annals is always very precise—it distinguishes the Old Irish (Gaels) from the descendants of the medieval English colony (*Gallaibh* or *Sean-Ghaill*) but the latter are regionalized to emphasize their specificity as distinctly rooted communities: *Gallaibh Míde* for the Old Foreigners of Meath, *Gallaibh Laigean* for those of South Leinster. Those who came to be known as the 'New English' are almost invariably rendered as *Na Saxanaigh* (The Saxons). However, the most intriguing linguistic recognition of an identity shift was clearly signalled in the Annals—that is the growing integration of the *Gallaibh* with the Old Irish. From the early 1580s these are recognized in the Annals as the *Fionngallaibh*—the fair or the favoured white foreigners whereas a second term for the New English is the *Dubhghaill*—the black/dark foreigners. Ethnic categories were being polarized. The move towards the unification of the Old Irish Gaels and the Old English was further signalled by the use of the inclusive term for both as *na Éireannaigh* i.e. the Irish, the shared dwellers of the land of *Éire*/Ireland.<sup>28</sup> These distinctions were emerging by the 1580s—at about the same time as the Protestant New English disown the Catholic Old English and put them metaphorically and physically "beyond the Pale."





References to categories of actors/institutions/events	Period I				Period II				Period I and Period II Overall Total (1460-1599)
	1460-1499	1500-1539	Sub-Total	% of Overall Total (1460-1599)	1540-1579	1580-1599	Sub-Total	% of Overall Total (1460-1599)	
Lords and sub-lords/chiefs of territories	96	43	139	78.5	14	24	38	21.5	177
Tanists (designated successor to Lord)	17	12	29	72.5	5	6	11	27.5	40
Major (Catholic) church officials (bishops, abbots, priors)	27	32	59	70.2	12	13	25	34.8	84
Other Church officers (priests, friars, vicars, choristers, etc.)	20	17	37	84.1	4	3	7	15.9	44
Specialist lay church officers (erenaghs, coarbs, termoners)	13	15	28	87.5	2	2	4	12.5	32
Monasteries newly created or renewed	12	3	15		Two monasteries renewed v. eleven destroyed	Majority of monasteries destroyed, ruined, closed, or reused as garrisons or mansions			
Lay cultural leaders (ollamhs, poets/chief musicians/historians/topographers)	39	21	60	67.8					
Brehons (Irish judges/law officers)	12	10	22	75.9	13	6	19	32.3	79
Irish military officials/officers (constables, captains, warders, etc.)	14	29	43	59.7	6	1	7	24.1	29
Lord Justice of Ireland (or Viceroy) or Deputy leading military operations in Ireland	14	29	43	59.7	20	9	29	40.2	72
New English novel categories/officers, captain of cavalry, lieutenants/generals/admirals/musketeers /engineers, etc.	6	14	20	15.7	37	70	107	84.3	127
	0	0	0	0	11	18	29	100	29

**Table 1.** References in the *Annals of the Four Masters* to categories of actors/institutions, demonstrating the cultural stability of Ireland pre-1540 and the dramatic impact of English conquest and colonization after 1540.

### Keating's *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*

The Irish exiles abroad—mixing across the cities and colleges of Europe—also sought to cement this new alliance, and leading this movement was the Tipperary-born priest Seatrúin Céitinn/Geoffrey Keating (c.1580-1644). Keating was born of Old English stock on Butler lands near Cahir town in Co. Tipperary, was trained in Irish literature by the local Gaelic scholars, the McGraths, and later studied theology and history in Bordeaux and Rheims. Widely read in Irish, Latin, English and French, Keating returned to Ireland in 1613, to earn fame as a diocesan preacher-cum-theologian and as a very stylish poet and linguist.<sup>29</sup> His greatest achievement was to become the doyen of early modern Irish historians-cum-topographers. His history of Ireland, *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*, was one of the most circulated manuscripts in the Irish language. Literally hundreds of manuscript copies were made well into the nineteenth century. The number and geographical extent of this large manuscript that have survived from most parts of Ireland—well over one hundred—is testimony to its immense popularity and wide reception after the 1630s.<sup>30</sup>

Astonishingly, Keating's *Foras Feasa* was not printed in full until the early twentieth century, probably the last book in European literature whose dissemination owed nothing, Joep Leerssen argues, to the printing press.<sup>31</sup> More significantly a translation into English was published as early as 1726—the first English translation in manuscript form dates back to 1635. Others followed over the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries including an 1811 edition which contains the first

printed map of Ireland in the Irish language.<sup>32</sup> Keating's collective history can, therefore, be seen as not only preserving the past but also as recreating and reinterpreting the historic past. Such an effort of reconstruction was a kind of compensation and reaction to a situation of conquest.

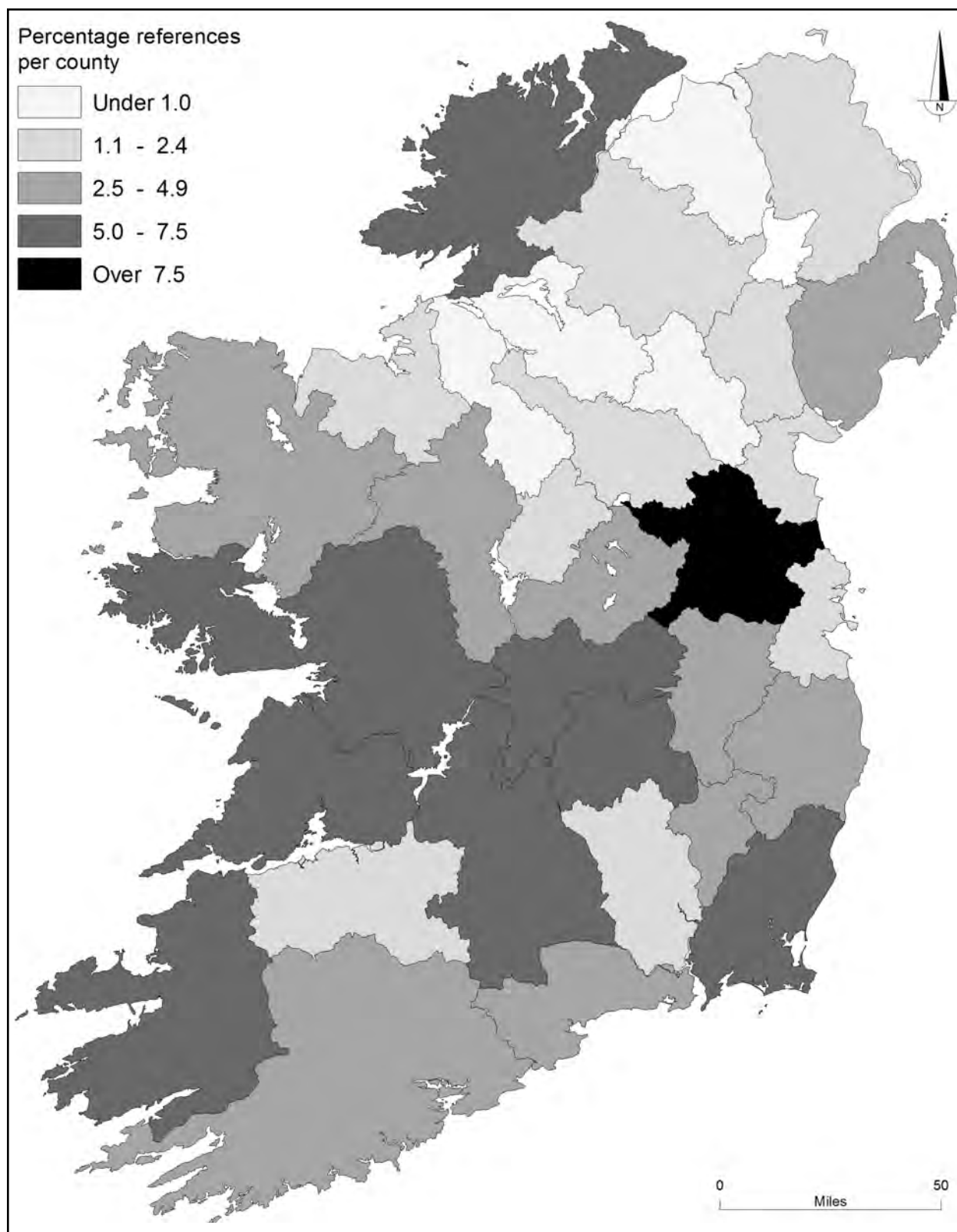
Keating's *Foras Feasa* is reasonably comprehensive from a topographic and placename perspective (Figure 2). Nevertheless—given that his narrative stops at c.1200—it is inevitable that it is pre-Norman Ireland that dominates the narratives of the human geography of Ireland. Central to his interpretation is both the old middle Kingdom of *Ríocht na Midhe* of North Leinster and the rich heritage of the great midland monasteries. Equally, there is a clear emphasis on the hammering out of an island-wide unity under such powerful medieval high kings as Brian Ború from Thomond (North Munster). The weakness of the narrative relating to mid- and south Ulster is also striking. However, this retrospective emphasis of the work may also point to another aspect of the wider traumatic experiences and responses—some nostalgia for a previous 'Golden Age' in the face of a devastating conquest.

Keating's work—and that of a number of other early seventeenth-century writers, some of whom were of Old English background—was in part a response to the English language writings of Spenser, Holinshed, Stanihurst, Moryson and Camden.<sup>33</sup> These and other English authors promoted a view of the "primitive" and "barbaric" nature of Irish society—and argued that religion and civilization were alien to those who lived in Ireland. Keating traced these views back to the medieval writer Giraldus Cambrensis whom he described in a caustic Irish phrase as "the bull of the herd who had produced false histories" of Ireland and the Irish.<sup>34</sup> Immersed in European Renaissance learning and insights about the new methods of the historian, Keating was to argue that none of the so-called historians of Ireland, writing in the English language, had consulted the primary sources—the Irish annals, charters, poetry and genealogies—which were collectively known in Irish as the *seanchas*. To Keating their work was without authority—*gan barántas*—since few if any of them understood or read Irish. Keating stressed the use of primary sources—especially the written sources. And it was Keating, more than any other writer, who crystallized the concept of the Irish as *na hÉireannaigh*.

In previous centuries the Gael and the Gallaibh had fought each other for control of Ireland. Now the dynamic interaction and conflict between the New English and the rest helped emphasize this new notion of "the Irish"—and Keating makes a critical distinction between these people, "the Catholic Irish"—and the New English/*The Nua-Ghaill*. Keating had a clear political objective in articulating this new position of an integrated Catholic Irish nation united against *Na Saxanaigh*, those "dreaded heretics." The State Papers indicate the English point of view on all this:

It is the perfidious Machiavellian friars at Louvain who foster this new perspective—who seek to reconcile all their countrymen—to unite both the old descendants of the Old English race and those that are mere Irish in a league of friendship and concurrence against Your Majesty and the true religion now professed in your Kingdoms.<sup>35</sup>

This comment is perceptive in noting the nation-building role of the Irish exiles, writing poetry and prose and publishing on the continent to illuminate Ireland's cause. Keating best reflects this Europeanization of the Irish experience—especially what was happening in the Low Countries, the center of new ways of thinking in art, learning, politics and religion. As early as the first decade of the seventeenth century, Sir George Carew, then English President of Munster, was to note: "As a consequence of exile, the Irish have become more civilised, grown to be disciplined soldiers, scholars, politicians and much further instructed in most points of religion than they were accustomed to be."<sup>36</sup>



**Figure 2.** Percentage distribution per county of places referred to in Keating's *History of Ireland*.



Keating's move to integrate the Old English into the Irish fold is even more profound. Carew had gathered materials in the early seventeenth century, including many maps—intending to write his history of Ireland. It seems to me that Keating's move in incorporating the Old English into the Irish tradition and nation is strongly emphasizing a major discontinuity and deep rupture between the heritage of the medieval English colony in Ireland and the ethos of the emerging New English colony. There is quite an ideological battle going on here, for Sir George Carew and others were anxious to write histories of Ireland which stressed continuities from the so-called original conquest of the medieval era to the seventeenth century, seeking to further legitimize current English policies. Keating counters this viewpoint by stressing ruptures, fault lines, and discontinuities by emphasizing how different the New English regime was. Yet in spite of English propagandist historians like Carew, we end up with a supreme irony. The New English led by people like Edmund Spenser denied their kinship with the Old English; and the Gaels of Ireland embraced them for their Irishness.<sup>37</sup> These changing allegiances are fundamental to what happened in early modern/colonial Ireland and are central to the depth of resistance to colonial conquest and rule.

Keating was also a modernizer in linguistic terms—he wrote in a fluent, highly polished style, making the very elaborate Irish language more accessible to a much wider audience. Of Keating it would be said he was the first to give intellectual form or shape to the story of Irish civilization—rendering a very sophisticated and deliberate synthesis of the reality of the island's past—rather like Camden had done for England and paralleled by equivalent work in France, Spain and elsewhere on the continent. But was Keating writing against the grain as the Irish language and literature appeared to be falling into oblivion? Was his work part of a rescue operation or was it part of a drive to reinvigorate the Irish language, culture and politics? More the latter, one suspects. It is also important to note that Keating argued that the Irish were a very lawful people if the law was fair and delivered fairly. Whereas close on 90 percent of the population was then Catholic and 60 percent of the property was then owned by the Catholic Irish elite, they constituted only a minority in parliament. The deliberately engineered Protestant-dominated Irish parliament from 1613 onwards was not seen as a place where the laws were fair and just but rather was seen as deeply partisan. Keating, like many others, arguing that Ireland had been annexed to the Crown of England, looked to the king *himself* not the parliament for good laws.<sup>38</sup> It is now impossible to say how much of Keating's and associated writings fed into the 1641 Rising/Rebellion but it is clear that the military, intellectual and clerical classes were deeply intermeshed and interwoven.

The discourse of English colonialism was by then being met with a discourse of Irish resistance and nation-building. The great Irish-language narratives of the early decades of the seventeenth century—including that of Keating's—could be interpreted as restoring some sense of purpose and pride to a people after much devastation as well as countering the detested hegemonic/historical discourse of English officials and narrators. But these Irish narratives might also be interpreted as evasive in part, blurring the harshest realities of the reconquest. If nothing else, the circulation of Keating's manuscript histories not only celebrated and made clear the historic strength of Irish civilization, but it also stiffened the boundary between *the Irish* and *Na Saxanaigh*. Looking at the wider comparative literature on colonialism—and recognizing that Ireland was England's first colony—Keating and his associates may well be the first colonized people to repudiate an imperialist ideology and imagine and define a new national community.<sup>39</sup>

### Five seventeenth-century political poems

The most definitive period in shaping Ireland's modern geography and history is the era that began with the 1641 rising/rebellion, leading to the Confederate wars and the Cromwellian

conquest and plantations onto 1659-60. It was difficult to write about the horrors of this period since their repercussions live on in people's memories and commemorations to this day. This was especially true when working on the thirty-three-volume 1641 Depositions and later the Cromwellian Examinations, where one can listen in to the pain and confusion of the Protestant settlers as they recounted the terrors of the early Irish attacks—and equally the later reprisals against the Irish and particularly the dirty war after Cromwell left Ireland.<sup>40</sup> In the Irish Folklore Commission archives only Daniel O'Connell—Catholic Ireland's greatest politician of the nineteenth century—surpasses Oliver Cromwell in number of references. Clearly for the Catholic Irish the memory of this perceived "demon-destroyer" and his actions had burned deep into their psyche. We still do not know—we may never know—how much of a demographic disaster Ireland suffered over the period 1641-59 and especially between 1641-3 and 1648-54. Indeed we are still uncertain what Ireland's total population was in 1641. My best guesstimate is a population of around 1.8 million in 1641, reduced to 1.3 or 1.4 million by 1654 and rising to 1.5 or 1.6 million by 1660, following the in-migration of perhaps one hundred thousand new British settlers.<sup>41</sup> Either way, it is certain that Ireland lost over a quarter- and perhaps a half-million of its population over this time (1641-54) through war, murders, reprisals, war-induced famine and plague and significant out-migration—losses probably shared proportionately between the Protestant settler (18 percent of total) and Catholic Irish populations.<sup>41</sup> Clearly, this is a most terrifying and traumatic period for both groups. Micheál O Siochrú's and Jane Ohlmeyer's *Ireland: 1641-Contexts and Reactions* deals at length with the experiences, memories and commemoration of these awful years for both the Protestant and Catholic communities.<sup>42</sup>

Irish-language sources give some sense of the Catholic Irish experiences and responses over this critical period and on into the eighteenth century. Given the depth of the trauma associated with such a devastating conquest, the classic response of some Irish poets was one of denial—denial that the world had changed so radically, denial of events too painful to articulate. Yet the preponderance of vernacular poetic voices that have survived interrogate not only the dislocations but, more particularly, the imposition of a radically new social and cultural framework. Irish-speaking communities were not passive receivers of knowledge transmitted downwards from an outsider conquering group; they were constantly engaged in trying to make sense of, interpret and give meaning to their own often rapidly changing experiences and worlds. Their storytellers, local historians, poets, priests and musicians continued to present to the parish, locality or townland community its significant "texts."

During the seventeenth century, the first English words to make fissures in the Irish language and poetry related to economic exactions, taxes and rents, to religious discrimination and to administrative and legal controls. The most pertinent commentary is provided in the edited text of *Five Seventeenth Century Political Poems* from five different poets.<sup>43</sup> Emphasizing the deep impact of English law in Ireland, these poets broke their Irish rhythms/harmonies with the names of powerful English legal institutions and processes: their poems are peppered with terms such as "Court of Wards," "Exchequer," "Star Chamber," "King's Bench," "Bishop's Court," "Assizes," "writ," "provost," "sheriff," "receiver," "cess" and "tax"—a litany that recalled their respective functions in proselytizing, increasing crown revenue, in outlawing and sweeping away Irish systems of law and land tenure (1603-5), in punishing "recusants," and in imprisoning and banishing "popish priests and school teachers." Not forgotten is one other "little" legal stratagem: "Surrender and Regrant", which required the Irish lords to "surrender" the lands (held under Gaelic and Gaelicized tenures) to the Crown and consent to their "re-granting" according to strict English property laws.

*Dlí beag eile do rinneadh do Gaelaibh,  
surrender ar a gceart do dhéanamh.  
Do chuir sin Leath Chuinn trí na chéile...*

(Yet another small law which was imposed on the  
Gael; To make surrender of what was theirs by right.  
This put Leath Chuinn [Gaelic Ireland] into  
turmoil...<sup>44</sup>)

A striking theme of much of this 1640s and 1650s Irish poetry is the celebration of both the prowess and heroism of the great Irish families—of both Gaelic and Old English descent. Yet the overwhelming impression is one of grief-stricken poets describing a devastated culture and ravaged landscapes that would long struggle to recover (themes evident even in the titles of the poems).<sup>45</sup> They were only too well aware of the pain that followed the rupturing of a society's psychic moorings, the undermining of a people's sense of place and identity. The parallels with Aztec and Incan poetry are striking.<sup>46</sup> In the 1750s, a century after the composition of Seán Ó Conaill's extraordinarily popular *Tuireamh na hÉireann* (*The Lament for Ireland*), this poem was repeated and kept in memory on account of the great knowledge of ancestral Irish culture comprehended in it.<sup>47</sup> Thus, the poets of the 1640s and 1650s came to perpetuate the memories of the cataclysm and trauma of conquest from a Catholic Irish perspective.

These mid seventeenth-century poets contrasted Ireland's former prosperity with the present miserable conditions and the devastated landscapes. They detailed the sufferings of the people, the beheadings, hangings and executions; churches destroyed and desecrated; monasteries thrown down to furnish materials for the palaces and mansions of the new elites, whether lay or ecclesiastical: lands confiscated and the landowners, with their families and tenants, transported to Connacht. Indeed, the most frequent English words to arrive in all these poems are "transplantation" and "transportation"—words that came to sound the death knell for the lives and loves of so many people. The hopes, aspirations and drive for redemption and liberation—fitfully, yet powerfully expressed in the 1630s—and dramatically attempted in the 1641 rising/rebellion—had evaporated: or so it seemed.

Following the Williamite victories and land confiscations, the 1690s was a time of celebration for the British at home and the new Protestant Irish and was known as the Glorious Revolution. For the Catholic Irish, this era saw the imposition of these so-called apartheid-like penal laws that were not fully repealed until the 1820s. In the previous seventeenth century, at least 85 percent of Irish land had been transferred into the hands of New English (and Scottish) colonists. The old Irish aristocratic order had almost disappeared and with it the patronage of the hereditary bardic poetic caste. Obviously this transformation of Irish culture, polity and economy is reflected in the Irish literature. Poets and poetry were transformed: poetry was no longer so elaborate in rhyming metres and so conventional; learned yet looser accentual verse became the norm, carried on by poet-priests and a growing number of lay-poets who came from the lesser gentry, well-to-do-farmers, teachers, craftsmen and women. As Neil Buttimer has shown, such highly accomplished poets as Daibidh Ó Bruadair (1625-98) and Aogán Ó Rathaille (c.1670-1729) in poems such as *An Longbriseadh* (*The Shipwreck*) and *Créachta crích Fódla* (*The Wounds of Ireland*) vividly express how their whole universe "had come apart and was foundering" as they register in archetypal forms the "major overturning of indigenous Irish culture."<sup>49</sup>

In addition, like the poem *Cill Cais*, there was a great blossoming of sophisticated folk poetry which became embedded in the Irish literature and oral/aural tradition—much of it composed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by anonymous poets and musicians. Such poetry was frequently recited or rather chanted to a lively audience or music session—for it is the dramatic or story-telling voice that is most characteristic and most effectively used in these poems. Most



interestingly, there is a revival of the lyrics of the Fianna poems—tales of those heroic, carefree warrior bands who had defended Ireland in mythic times. Clearly such poetic stories had a new psychological function at this time. It should be appreciated that verse during these centuries—as with songs and ballads—had a much wider function than is characteristic today, being more often used where prose might now be considered more appropriate. As Séan Ó Tuama notes, for the best of these poets—lyricists of great intellectual energy and skill—verse was a vehicle for not only evoking personal or national mood and passion “but also for social, historical and other rational discourses.”<sup>50</sup> All of this took place in a context where the institutions that had hitherto supported Irish language, poetry and literature had almost disappeared—we are referring here to the educational, legal, religious and economic institutions once densely scattered across the island.

The particular trauma experienced by the declassed poets—like Aogán Ó Rathaille—comes through as they try to make sense and give shape to their own personal chaos and trauma through their poetry. One is reminded how in our own time poets like Robert Lowell managed to survive and keep themselves together and sane via their poetry.<sup>51</sup> Otherwise it was to the madhouse or, as with some other modern poets, suicide.

### Poems of the dispossessed

A detailed place-based analysis of the poetic collection *Poems of the Dispossessed* edited by Ó Tuama and with the English translations by Thomas Kinsella has been carried out (Figure 3). A substantial majority of these poets came from the southern province of Munster. Munster was by then the heartland of both the resistance and the poetry. Literal displacement was a major theme—reflections on the castles and mansions now razed to the ground or abandoned like O’Loughlin’s castle in the Burren in Clare:

*Á fhággháil ‘na aonar fúibh,  
rostadh fairsing múir uí Róigh.  
Tulach Uí Róigh mhórga na múrtha mbeann.  
Gan choirm, gan ceol seolta ná lúbadh lann.*

(The great rooms of O Loughlin’s house  
abandoned to the birds alone.....  
Stately Tulagh Uí Róigh, of towering walls,  
without ale or the music of sails or blades  
flexing.<sup>52</sup>)

Obviously, poems of dispossession describing the seizing of mansions, the seizing of the best lands, “once well-defended and bordered places” were central. The declassed poets remembered the lands of the great and generous lords who had been their patrons, their “settlements and lands now savaged by alien lords” and their language outlawed. These were laments too for the lavish hospitality of the Big House and reveries of a vanished world of revelry, music, singing, hunting and poetic competitions.

The enmity towards the New English settlers was fiercely stated and the bitterness of the ethnic divide comes through time and time again. An earlier Seathrún Céitinn poem is typical:

At the news from Fál’s [Ireland’s] high plain I cannot sleep  
I am sick till doom at the plight of its faithful flock.  
Long have they stood as a hedge against hostile trash  
But a lot of the cockle has grown up through them at last.<sup>53</sup>

That very dominant English colonial metaphor of the need to break and plough the ground and get rid of the weeds (the Irish) so as to plant the good seed (hence the use of the term “Plantations”)



**Figure 3.** Distribution of home-places of poets identified in *An Duanaire 1600-1900: Poems for the Dispossessed*.

was reversed by the Irish poets who saw Irish lands polluted by new weeds. The poets rarely if ever described the distinctions as rooted in religion—the division was ethnic and national, the battle was between Irish and English notions of civilization.

A recurring theme was a comparison of the Irish and the Israelites in Egypt, best represented in a poem called *An Díbirt go Connachta/Exodus to Connacht*:

*Uirscéal as sin tuigthear libh:  
clann Isreal a bhean le Dia,  
san Éigipt cé bhí i mbroid  
furtacht go grod a fuair siad.*

(Consider a parable of this:  
Israel's people, God's own,  
Although they were in bonds in Egypt,  
Found in time a prompt release.)

So there was always lingering hope of redemption—always hope in times of despair. *Exodus to Connacht* concludes:

*A Dhia atá fial, a thriath na mbeannachta,  
féach na Gael go léir gan bharanta;  
má táimid ag triail siar go Connachta,  
fágmaid 'nár ndiaidh fó chlain ár seanchairde.*

(God, Who art generous, O Prince of Blessings,  
behold the Gael, *stripped of authority* [my italics];  
Now as we journey Westward to Connacht.  
old friends we'll leave behind us in their grief.)

And if not to Connacht, the poet regretted that the youth of Ireland were being scattered to foreign lands.<sup>54</sup>

The new breed of landlord came in for a fierce criticism. Well-to-do farmer-poet Sean Clárach Mac Dónaill (1691-1754) described the behavior of the landlord Dawson in the Glen of Aherlow in Co. Tipperary.

Keep fast under cover, o stones, in closet of clay  
this grey-haired Dawson, a bloody and treacherous butcher.  
Not in struggle and strife in the fight are his exploits known  
but ravaging and hanging and mangling the poor forever....

To the wails of the abject he opened not his gate  
and answered no cry, nor gave them food for their bodies.  
If they dragged off brushwood or sticks or bits of bushes  
he would draw down streams of blood from their shoulderblades.<sup>55</sup>

Dawson's may be an extreme example of landlord behavior. Yet surprisingly a contemporary of Mac Dónaill, the Anglican Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Jonathan Swift, has much the same to say in the English language of the new landlord class.<sup>56</sup>

But the dominant theme—which was already present in Ulster poetry at the turn of the seventeenth century and echoed and re-echoed in that of the Munster poetry—is the attention to soundscapes—the lost landscapes of sound in this profoundly oral/aural culture—and the silence that had followed the conquest, the land-owning and administrative revolutions. The poems return again and again to the absence of the beloved sounds of the language itself—the songs, the sounds of the harps and poetry, the feasting with wine and talk, the sounds of soldiers as cattle are plundered, the sounds of oars entering the harbour, of gulls in sea-flight, of chess fought hard, debates over books and the words and music of wisemen and gentlewomen.<sup>57</sup> And the



Irish placenames so lovingly listed, are a characteristic feature—as are the varied bird sounds of a former much more woodland culture. There are powerful evocations of the emptiness of the landscape in the wake of military defeat; halls, mansions, churches and assembly-places stand void.<sup>58</sup> The voices of their one-time companies and congregations stilled.

These poems are reveries of a vanished world—the recreation of dream landscapes as a way of dealing with the trauma—like the “*aisling*” dream poems that I shall discuss at the end of this section. A once familiar and loved landscape came to be seen and felt as alien, alienated and alienating. Part of the logic of colonialism, as argued by Franz Fanon, is the alienation of this colonial subject from home territory—and from the self.<sup>59</sup> Once known and familiar home landscapes become strange and alienated through the process of colonial displacement and “othering.” The concept of home—whether domestic or territorial—is dislocated and displaced since these domestic or territorial spheres have become sites of foreign inscriptions—as people are made strangers in their own land.<sup>60</sup> And the best Irish poets linked the traumatic ambivalences of their own personal, physis displacement to the wider disjunctions of political and cultural existence all over Ireland.<sup>61</sup>

However, as the eighteenth century rolled on, other poems revealed the vital and sometimes novel central places of the adapting culture—the meeting-place of chapel for Sunday Mass, the fair days and market days with their boisterous street life, lively dances, weddings, wakes and funerals, meetings at burial places, holy wells, in country pubs, in the big houses of the surviving Irish gentry and at hurling matches, race-meetings and pattern/saints days. It was not all gloom and doom—a boisterous gaiety was also there for the Catholic Irish were only half conquered, only half defeated. Yet this merriment may have been the kind that often emerges at and after a time of societal chaos—a kind of release from an otherwise repressive environment.

One further idea needs to be explored in relation to poetic materials from the mid eighteenth century that deals with redemption rather than destruction. What I have argued here is that recurring poetic themes and stories—given their retention, dissemination and transmission over so many generations—clearly represented something valuable, even therapeutic in a culture. Hence the ongoing central importance of a manuscript literature like Keating’s *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*. These stories and poems clearly point to cultural self-knowledge. In the *Cill Cais* poem we had a celebration of the *deigh-bhean*—the gentlewoman, Lady Butler—but perhaps there is an echo here too of the Irish *spéirbhean*—the *dream woman*, the notion of the *bean feasa*, the wise woman of knowledge, of healing, of birth and death.

Central to seventeenth and eighteenth *aisling* or vision poems is the notion of Ireland personified as a sometimes beautiful woman (sometimes turned into a hag)—now having to consort with an upstart intruder—and seeking the liberation of her country and the return of her rightful spouse or king, then envisaged as the return of a Stuart king. This *aisling* or vision poem is the dominant form of *political* literature in Irish from c.1650 to 1800. Deep in this Irish tradition too was the notion that a just and rightful king must be married to the territory—to the land—as personified by the territorial deity, the sovereignty Queen figure named *Éire* or *Banba*—the old names for Ireland and thus symbolizing the royal sovereignty principle. In Irish folk tradition, this feminine principle, as representing the symbol of sovereignty, was powerfully associated with, named in and embedded in, a dynamic landscape of liminal areas. These include coasts, seas, rivers, mountains, cross-roads, funerary tombs and places of solitude. Indeed in the folk tradition a gendered conception of landscape, social environment and the Cosmos prevailed, as evidenced in the myths and stories associated with places.<sup>62</sup> The landscape and its place names constituted (and still constitute) a phenomenal memory bank across Ireland. And this sovereignty symbol is associated with fertility, prosperity—and especially the celebration of the harvest festivals.

There is widespread use of the *aisling* motif in poetry after the mid seventeenth century. These *aisling* poems link the banishment of the “foreigners from Banba / Ireland” with “expelling

Luther's tribe and all English-speaking churls." Thus ethnic, linguistic and religious dimensions of a national ethos are now fused together. However, by the 1720s and certainly by the 1740s, any belief in a restoration of the Stuarts had died. The *aisling* poems then went in two different directions. Some became more clearly conventional and formulaic and in many ways are escapist-dreaming of a redemption but without much hope of it.

On the other hand, the *aisling* is linked to agrarian protest movements. From the mid eighteenth century and intensifying with the secret Whiteboy agrarian movements, which forcefully opposed landlord enclosures and excessive tithe and rent payments, a really striking illustration of the adaptation of old cultural forms to new political needs occurs. The beautiful and now highly sexualized woman image of Ireland is no longer given the ancient Goddess names for Ireland—*Banba*, *Ériu* or *Fodhla*—but are now democratized and given more everyday names like *Sadbh*, *Cáitlín Ní hUallacháin*, *Síle*, *Nóirín*, *Siobhán* or *Meibhín*. The Whiteboys are celebrated in quite a number of the vision *aisling* poems, such as *The Children of Sadbh*. Here the *spéirbhean* implores "the true gentlemen of proper manners to come out on the attack any night at all [...]. Let us forcefully drive out the hordes of English-speakers from the harbours of our forebears."<sup>63</sup>

The Whiteboys were so called because they wore a uniform of a white cloak and white cockade, which combined the medieval *rites-de-passage* dress-form of Wrenboys and Strawboys with the French Jacobite style—and there were connections between the Munster Whiteboy culture and France. But whereas the later French woman-figure of Marianne—who personifies and represents France—is a clear symbol of the Republican ideals of liberty and equality, the Irish symbolism combines the older notion of royal sovereignty with a forward-looking, democratic drive for justice and equality. Mixed symbols, yes—but a corner had been turned.

It might, therefore, be argued that for some at least, the 1760s represented the beginning of the end of the political traumas experienced by the Irish from the late sixteenth century onwards but the wider cultural trauma persisted. Other traumas would follow. Yet it is interesting that by the 1760s and 1770s the balance between the Irish and English languages had gradually shifted in favour of the latter. Future political opposition to the ruling Anglo-Irish Protestant establishment would be expressed either bilingually or more and more in English language forms, though still rooted—as we have just noted—in an Irish poetic tradition. That tradition sustained a strong sense of Irish nationality and a sharp awareness of the levels of oppression associated with the English-speaking Protestant regime.<sup>64</sup>

However, the above examples may still hint at the ongoing problem of translations and continuing misunderstandings between the two cultures. The hybrid Irish had learned to speak English—it is true. But there was still a very significant cultural barrier. Their thought patterns and cultural understandings were still embedded in the Irish language, in particular social codes, cognitive styles, epistemologies and in the landscape and its cultural meanings.

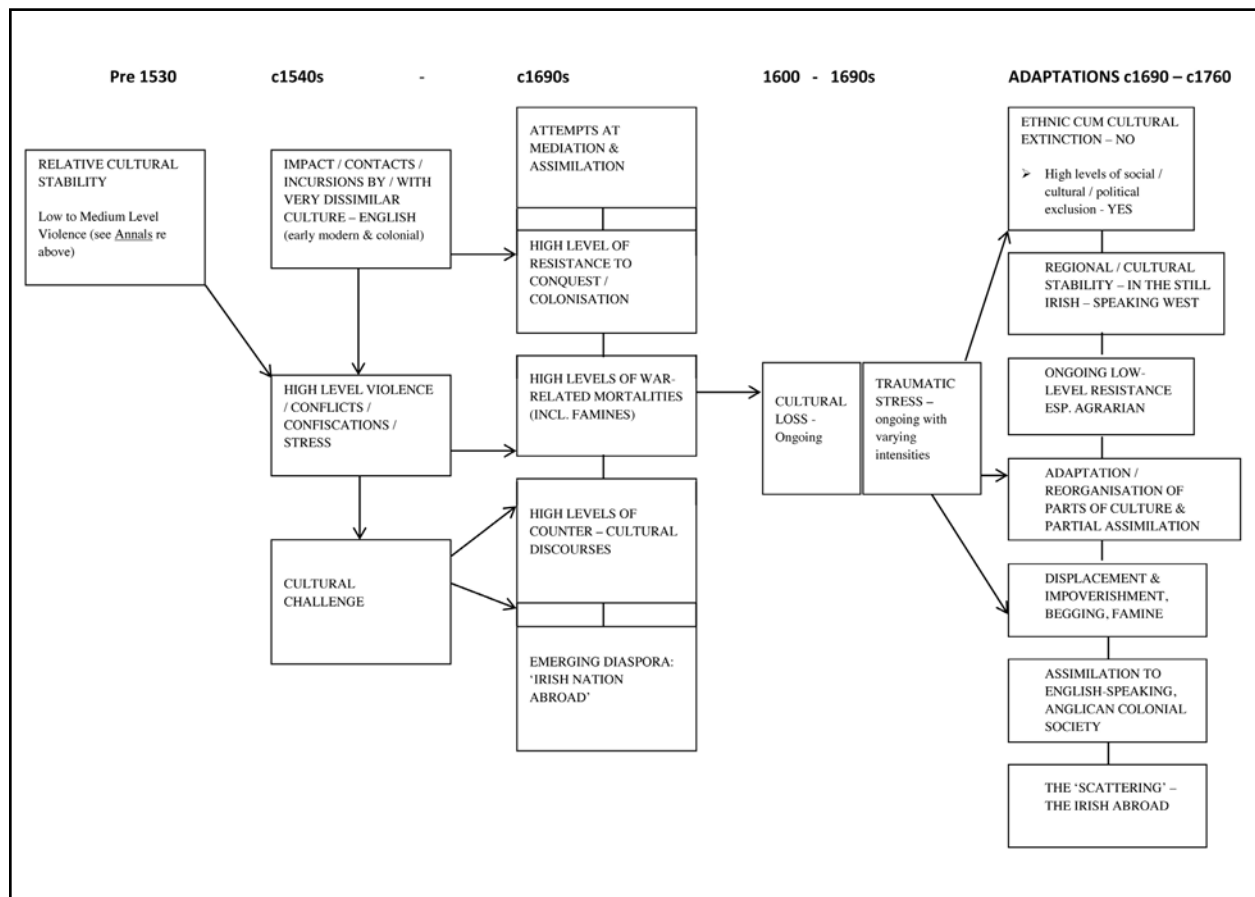
### **Cultural trauma and the Catholic Irish c.1530–c.1760: a summary**

To conclude, a preliminary sketch or path-analysis of cultural trauma as experienced by the Catholic Irish after c.1530 is summarized. Traumatic events are judged to be so strong that their legacies remain intact and salient across generations. As B.H. Stamm *et al.* argue, historical trauma involves communal feelings of family and social disruption, confusions about identities, grief and angst often manifested in destructive ways, daily re-experiencing of the colonial trauma through racism and stereotyping and lack of resolution of a country's communal pain.<sup>65</sup> Lack of resolution may be embedded in the most central feature of traumas—the disassociation of feelings from and about unbearable experiences and happenings. Involved here is denial that these awful events ever happened to the group or individual, so denying the shame and guilt of being a victim.<sup>66</sup> For healing, this shame and guilt must be acknowledged, addressed and articulated and narrated.

In the Irish context, the relatively peaceful conditions of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries were shattered between the 1540s and 1690s by an epic and often brutal encounter between two civilizations—English and Irish—which resulted in enormous cultural losses and traumatic stresses for the conquered, Catholic Irish. Their adaptations to these traumatic events took many different forms (Figure 4).

As explained at the outset of this paper, the documentary evidence in the English language for England's conquest of Ireland in the "early modern" era is both voluminous and highly varied in format. In contrast, the level of documentation in the Irish language dealing with this colonial era is much less, much narrower in range and, in addition, quite a number of Irish annals and manuscripts were confiscated or burned by English officials in this turbulent era. As might be predicted, the traumatic consequences for the Irish of this imperial expansion and violent conquest are rarely if ever addressed in the English colonial record. On the other hand, some Irish language texts do provide insight into the Irish reaction to conquest, its aftermath and in particular the ways of coping with the ensuing trauma. Four key Irish language texts—the Annals of the Four Masters, Keating's history, and two major poetic collections—have been utilized in this paper to explore these themes.

During the late fifteenth century and the very early sixteenth century (up to the 1520s), Ireland was characterized by relative cultural stability. Apart from weak outliers of English rule and custom beyond the Dublin Pale and south Wexford, Irish—either Gaelic or Gaelicized—institutions dominated and flourished. The Annals of the Four Masters report significant



**Figure 4.** Path analysis of cultural trauma experienced by the (Catholic) Irish.



continuities in a whole series of key actors and institutions over the period—including lords and sub-lords, major and minor church officers and specialist key church officials as monasteries were either newly created or renewed. Lay cultural leaders such as professors (*ollaimh*), poets, chief musicians, historians and topographers, brehons, constables and warders remained vital actors in the cultural system. Low to medium levels of violence were characteristic—governed by the jostling between the greater and lesser lordships.<sup>67</sup> For the most part pre-Renaissance modes of thought and living still prevailed.

All of this was to change from the 1530s and especially the 1540s onwards. England's imperial expansionist drive into Ireland was then firmly anchored in a centralizing and modernizing state system, "headed by a powerful monarch and supported by an elaborate but co-ordinated system of administration and command that included ministers, the judiciary, army and navy officers, local government officials, soldiers, merchants and the officers of the Anglican Church."<sup>68</sup> As we have seen, this nationalizing culture expressed itself in a rapidly evolving and rich language—English—and most critically wrote itself and its identity into world history via the new print technology. Between 1540 and 1599, the Annals record the sudden acceleration in military operations by English viceroys in Ireland, the emergence of new officer categories, captains of cavalry, generals, admirals, lieutenants, musketeers and engineers on the Irish frontier. The key institutions of a more conservative Irish society and culture were assaulted, disrupted and eventually dismantled.

Two very dissimilar cultures came into contact and conflict. Early attempts at mediation and assimilation failed. For a century and a half (1540s to 1690s), Ireland was characterized by high levels of state violence, regional conflicts, numerous land confiscations and increasing cultural stress for the Irish, arising from their systematic subjugation by the colonizing English and later Scottish forces and settlers. This violent reconquest and colonization of Ireland by the English (later British) state and its representatives was met with significant levels of violent resistance. There were high levels of war-related mortalities, including significant war-induced famines firstly in Munster (1579-83), then in Ulster (1599-1603) and then island-wide during the mid seventeenth-century Cromwellian wars. Catherine Nash has commented on the problematic impact of European-centered modernity drives outside of Europe—a dark side that involved "violent, coercive and insidious cultural practices" against so-called traditional societies in the New World.<sup>69</sup> This too was Ireland's experience.

Ireland's capacity for cultural resistance appears to have been greater than its ability to successfully sustain a military defence. English propagandist texts justifying and legitimizing conquest were met by the blossoming of a counter-culture, epitomized in the writings of the Four Masters and of Seatrún Céitinn / Geoffrey Keating. This renaissance in Irish writing and incipient nation-building was energized by the emerging "emigrant Irish nation" overseas—in Irish colleges abroad, in merchant houses in many Atlantic European cities and in the officer corps of continental Catholic armies. The sudden military and administrative challenges posed by the conquering English and the associated loss of cultural leaders was at least partially countered by this resurgence in Irish writing which—it needs to be stressed—was widely promulgated in a still predominantly oral/aural culture. Expansionist English nationalizing drives prompted the emergence of a nationalizing Irish elite.

However, cultural resistance and the growing integration of Old Irish and Old English did not prevent the achievement of English (later British) hegemony in military, political, economic, legal and linguistic spheres. This hegemonic control was achieved and deepened over three phases: in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, in the Cromwellian conquest of the mid seventeenth century and by the Williamite victories and confiscations at the end of that century. Even by 1600, Irish cultural and political losses were immense as its intellectual, political

and ecclesiastical elites—the traditional authority figures—were eliminated, radically reduced or forced into exile.<sup>70</sup> The older centers of rule and cultural leadership were ‘emptied’ of their power and their familiar landscapes (as at *Cill Cais*) made unfamiliar by an array of new settlement and legal arrangements from plantation towns and newly established landlord estates to greatly enlarged barony, county and island-wide administrations. A profoundly unequal relationship intensified between an imperial, urbanizing, print-based and aggressively expansionist English culture and language and a newly-outlawed Irish language and culture that was far more rural-based, more oral/aural in style and more manuscript dependent.

Levels of repression, shaming and humiliation invariably shaped a range of long-lasting cultural responses. Some poets adopted a denial strategy—dwelling imaginatively in the past and choosing not to see or speak of the chaotic socio-political situation developing in front of their eyes.<sup>71</sup> The repressive environment that came with military and legal rule brought with it the life-saving need of not speaking up, the fear of confrontation, the dread of persecution from a whole panoply of penal laws could be brought back into play at very short notice. For safety’s sake came the need to suppress true feelings, to speak in code or sideways, the need to develop secretive ways of doing and saying things—for example, priests disguising themselves as servants or harpers in Big Houses in order to sustain their mission—or the need to develop secret organizations like the Houghers (early eighteenth century) and the Whiteboys (1760s and 1770s). One could not be too demonstrative either in one’s actions or in the display of one’s by-then limited material wealth. Keeping such a low profile also meant that the traveller, viewing this world from a coach window, saw a dishevelled and disordered landscape, which was in many ways still quite a nuanced and well understood-world—not least the landscape of a very discreet yet well-organized Catholic Church. The colonial state’s instruments of surveillance ran up against sophisticated cultural techniques for ensuring invisibility and impenetrability.<sup>72</sup>

The repression of so many negative feelings also had their dark expressions. The response to violence produced, for example, the vicious, explosive attacks and retaliations of the early months and years of the 1641 rising/rebellion. The rage displayed by the Catholic Irish in a number of uprisings and in particular in the early 1640s had much to do with humiliation and inferiority. Evelin G. Lindner contends that humiliation—the enforced lowering of the status of a person or groups, a process of subjugation that damages or strips away their pride, honor and dignity—is not just about power.<sup>73</sup> Rather it is seen as prompting the perpetrators—in this case the Catholic Irish—to seek *revenge* for past humiliations. This notion of humiliation also carries the need to rid oneself of the fear of further subjugation or feelings of admiration for the culture and life of the conqueror—the original humiliating force. Lindner describes humiliation as “the nuclear bomb of the emotions,”<sup>74</sup> leading to the kind of explosive action and “the fury of the rebels” so often recounted in the state’s own documents as in the 1641 depositions and sometimes echoed in Irish language poetry. But as has happened in so many cases of ethnic violence, the resurgent Irish ended up in a worse situation than before as a consequence of both the late sixteenth century and the Cromwellian wars and subsequent plantations.

Levels of sexual violence were exacerbated due to the trauma and effects of conquest. Likewise, levels of alcoholism, vagrancy and begging all rose after the conquest. A reverence for family land, its retention and transmission was reinforced—sometimes to pathological levels. A patriarchal land-law worked its way throughout the whole social system and reinforced male dominance. One other inevitable product of the trauma of conquest and plantation was a widespread confusion about issues of identity.<sup>75</sup> One hitherto-unrecognized factor adding to the explosiveness of various risings/rebellions was the threats to identities that followed on from military, religious and linguistic repression, the rapidity of social changes, the attempts to anglicize family surnames by the elimination of ‘O’ and ‘Mac’ prefixes and the anglicization of

placenames. Yet there were striking regional and group variations in the intensity of traumatic feelings, and in levels of adaptation and resistance to these pressures.

By the early 1700s, one can identify a number of different forms of adaptation by the Catholic-Irish to the English/British regime. Ethnic-cum-cultural extinction-promulgated as an objective amongst some extreme elements in the British elite<sup>76</sup>—had failed, but the Catholic Irish were now subject to high levels of exclusion in most spheres of life. Regional and cultural stability remained most characteristic in the still Irish-speaking communities in the west of Ireland and especially in the province of Connacht. There was ongoing low-level resistance to British institutions and personnel—firstly by guerrilla bands known as “rapparees” and in the early decades of the eighteenth century by localized agrarian movements, which aimed to conserve customary rights in relation to land and labour (Figure 4). Many of the poorer Irish subsisting on small holdings on marginal lands and along the roadsides lowered their heads, adapted to the new realities, took good care of their cow, a few cattle and pigs and/or grain crops to pay the rent, became servants and workers on the estates or big farms or endured in the burgeoning Irishtowns and cabin suburbs.

However, probably the most dominant—certainly the most politically significant—form of adaptation to colonial rule took place among the mainly tenant farming and merchant classes. This involved the reorganization of some segments of Irish culture, combined with a partial assimilation to English cultural norms—including the evolution and spread of bilingualism in Irish and English between the 1690s and 1760s. These adaptive strategies included the emergence of independent, secular educational provision via the so-called “hedge schools.” The poet, priest, musician and balladeer continued to occupy central roles in articulating the beliefs, values and mythico-history of the Catholic Irish. The reorganization and revitalization of the territorial and behavioral organization of the Catholic Church was also a central feature with a revitalized parish playing a critical role. A wide range of folkloric practices and rituals in the localities were not only maintained but also strengthened. Other strategies of accommodation included the maintenance and elaboration of a number of recreational activities and leisure-cum-meeting places including public houses, hurling matches and horse racing. A striking innovation was the emergence and elaboration at growing regional scales of secret, sophisticated, quasi-political agrarian movements like the Whiteboys and Righboys. Some Catholic Irish also came to occupy key niche positions in specific sectors of the landlord estate and urban economies. The maintenance of still vibrant quasi-lineage kinship systems and information fields may well have been the most significant survival strategy. These adaptive processes reinforced powerful identification with specific places and key ethnic symbols that may have only partially helped in healing with the traumatic consequences of colonialism.<sup>77</sup>

Even amongst this more adaptive group, attitudes of passive compliance were strategically necessary to survive in this profound unequal colonizer/colonized relationship. Fanon, Said and Memmi have identified the long-term consequences of this post-colonial dependency.<sup>78</sup> Irish-born psychiatrist, Garrett O'Connor, describes the behavioral syndrome of subjugated people like the Catholic Irish as “malignant shame”—a combination of dependency, low self-esteem, self-misrepresentation of cultural inferiority and suppressed feelings.<sup>79</sup> He sees these behaviors as consequent on the destructive forces of colonialism—including physical abuse, shaming and humiliation—being internalized and transmitted across generations. He asserts that this behavioral syndrome is concentrated in post-colonial cultures such as Ireland and Mexico where imperialist forces have subjected the indigenous peoples to appalling excesses.<sup>80</sup> The core of the problem for such populations is a widespread conviction of cultural inferiority, generated by a prolonged abuse of power in the relationship between the colonizer and colonized.



For the most marginalized poor, so-called adaptation in the eighteenth century involved displacement, further impoverishment, begging and sometimes exposure to local famines. In contrast, a significant minority—mainly from the aristocratic, gentry and merchant classes of the original Catholic Irish—came to identify with and be assimilated to the anglophone, Anglo-Irish “Protestant ascendancy.” Another very significant form of adaptation involved the scattering of the emigrant Irish—first to continental Europe—and later in the eighteenth century across the English-speaking world. This scattering was to be massively augmented during and after the Great Irish Famine of the mid-nineteenth century—probably the ultimate expression of the long-run effects of colonialism in Ireland. The historical traumas and literary responses to the earlier conquest and colonization—addressed in this paper—were to be renewed and deepened by the horrors and traumas of the Great Hunger.<sup>81</sup> Trauma piled upon trauma.

## NOTES

- 1 William J. Smyth, *Map-Making, Landscapes and Memory: A Geography of Colonial and Early Modern Ireland c.1530–1750* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2006). See also Gerry Kearns, [‘Historical Geographies of Ireland: Colonial Contexts and Postcolonial Legacies’](#) in *Historical Geography*, vol. 41 (2013): 24–26.
- 2 Eduardo Duran and Bonnie Duran, “Introduction,” in *Native American Postcolonial Psychology*, eds. Duran and Duran (New York: State University of New York Press, 1995), 1–3. See also Eduardo Duran and Bonnie Duran, Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart, and Susan Yellow Horse-Davis, “Healing the American Indian Soul Wound,” in *International Handbook of Multi-generational Legacies of Trauma*, ed. Yael Danieli (New York: Plenum Press, 1998), 341–354. See also B. Hudnall Stamm, ed., *Measurement of Stress, Trauma and Adaptation* (Baltimore, Maryland: Sidran Press, 1996); Ruth Leys, *Trauma: A Genealogy* (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 2000) and Leys, *From Guilt to Shame: Auschwitz and After* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2007).
- 3 Jeffrey C. Alexander, Ron Eyerman, Bernhard Giesen, Neil J. Smelser and Piotr Sztompka, *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004). See especially Chapter 1: Jeffrey C. Alexander, “Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma,” 1–30.
- 4 Smyth, *Map-Making*, 21–197. See also Smyth, “Towards a Cultural Geography of the 1641 Rising/Rebellion,” in *Ireland: 1641 Contexts and Reactions*, eds. Micheál Ó Siochrú and Jane Ohlmeyer (Manchester, United Kingdom: Manchester University Press, 2013), 71–94; and reference 40 below.
- 5 The Irish language version of the poem is from *An Duanaire 1600–1900: Poems of the Disposessed*, ed. Seán Ó Tuama with translation into English verse by Thomas Kinsella (Mountrath/Portlaoise: Dolmen Press, 1981), 328–329. This English translation fuses that of Frank O’Connor and my own.
- 6 The full references to each of these texts are provided at the appropriate place in the discussion below.
- 7 Edmund Spenser, *A View of the State of Ireland*, ed. W.L. Renwick (Oxford, United Kingdom: Clarendon Press, 1970).
- 8 Patricia Palmer, *Language and Conquest in Early Modern Ireland* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2001). For other insightful views from the Irish language side of the frontier, see Marc Caball, *Poets and Politics: Reaction and Continuity in Irish Poetry 1558–1625* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1998).
- 9 See Palmer, *Language and Conquest*, especially the section “A ‘Discourse of Sameness’ and the Elision of Irish,” 45–64.

- 10 Ibid., Chapter 2, especially 69–72.
- 11 David Edwards, “The Escalation of Violence in Sixteenth Century Ireland,” in *Age of Atrocity: Violence and Political Conflict in Early Modern Ireland*, eds. David Edwards, Pádraig Lenihan and Clodagh Tait (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), 34–78, especially 34.
- 12 David B. Quinn, *The Elizabethans and the Irish* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1966), 140.
- 13 John McGurk, “The Pacification of Ulster, 1600–3,” in *Age of Atrocity*, 119–129, 129.
- 14 Palmer, *Language and Conquest*, 185. See also Raymond Hickey (ed.), *Researching the Languages of Ireland* (Uppsala, Sweden: Uppsala University, 2011), 27–29.
- 15 Breandán Ó Buachalla in *Aisling Ghéar: na Stíobhartaigh agus an t-Aos Léinn 1603–1788* (Dublin: An Clóchomhar, 1996) provides the most comprehensive interpretation for this period of the complex relationships between politics and poetry in the Irish language. See 69–129 and especially 117–26. See also Michelle O’Riordan *The Gaelic Mind and the Collapse of the Gaelic World* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1990) for a rather different perspective which stresses the more hermetic, enclosed nature of the bardic world and its commentary; see also Joep Leerssen, *Mere Irish and Fíor-Ghael: Studies in the Idea of Irish Nationality, Its Development and Literary Expression Prior to the Nineteenth Century*, 2nd edition (Cork: University Press, 1996), for interesting insights into the roles and functions of the bardic poet “who did not recite his own poetry but would leave that task to one of his retinue, a reciter-harpist,” 152–153.
- 16 “Mé an murdhuchan | An mhuir Goill” was written in the 1570s by Brian Ó Gnín, quoted in Patricia Palmer’s superb study *Language and Conquest*, 211.
- 17 Seathrún Céitinn (Geoffrey Keating), *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn: The History of Ireland*, 4 vols., eds. D. Comyn and P. Dineen (Dublin: Irish Texts Society, 1914).
- 18 John O’Donovan, ed. and transl., *Annála Ríoghachta Éireann: Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters from the Earliest Times to the Year 1616*, vols 1–7, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (Dublin: Edmund Burke, 1998). See Bernadette Cunningham, *The Annals of the Four Masters: Irish History, Kingship and Society in the Early Seventeenth Century* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2010), especially chapters 2 and 4 for a useful survey of the contexts and influences at work in the writing up of the Annals.
- 19 Ó Buachalla, “[Annála Ríoghachta Éireann is Foras Feasa ar Éirinn: An Comhthéacs Comhaimseartha](#),” *Studia Hibernica* 22–3 (1982–3): 59–105.
- 20 See “Introductory Remarks” in *Annála Ríoghachta*, vii–xlv.
- 21 See, for example, James F. Kenney, *The Sources for the Early History of Ireland* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1929), 37; Tom Dunne, “[The Gaelic Response to Conquest and Colonisation: The Evidence of the Poetry](#),” *Studia Hibernica* 20 (1980): 7–30, 19.
- 22 Ó Buachalla, “An Comhthéacs Comhaimseartha,” 59–105. See also Raymond Gillespie, “Introduction” in Raymond Gillespie and Ruairi Ó hUiginn, eds., *Irish Europe, 1600–1650: Writing and Learning* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2013), 11–15.
- 23 Edwards, “Escalation of Violence,” 64–65.
- 24 John Davies, *A Discovery of the True Causes Why Ireland was Never Entirely Subdued* [London, 1612] (Shannon: Irish Academic Press, 1969), 368; see also Ben Kiernan, *Blood and Soil: A World History of Genocides and Extermination from Sparta to Darfur* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2006).
- 25 Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Santa Barbara, California: Grove Press, 1963), 49–50, 148–150.
- 26 This material is based on an occupational analysis of the *Annals of the Four Masters* between 1460 and 1599.
- 27 David Edwards, “The escalation of violence in sixteenth-century Ireland” in Edwards *et al.*, *Age of Atrocity*, 34–78; see also his “Out of the Blue: Provincial Unrest in Ireland before 1641,”

- in *Ireland: 1641*, eds. Ó Siochrú and Ohlmeyer, 95–114.
- 28 As elaborated upon by Caball in *Poets and Politics*, 12–13, 45–51, 66–67, 100–102. Later sixteenth-century bardic poets such as Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn in Connacht and a nobleman poet of Old English background such as William Nuinseann (William Nugent) in Leinster both emphasized a newly forged patriotic sensibility and the emergence of the notion of the Irish / *na hÉireannaigh* and the “effecting of ethnic coalescence amongst both historic communities on the basis of language and culture.” See also T. T. O’Donnell ed. *Selections from the Zoilomastix of Philip O’Sullivan Beare [1625]* (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1960) where O’Sullivan, writing in Spain, makes the same inferences.
  - 29 See Bernadette Cunningham’s *The World of Geoffrey Keating: History, Myth and Religion in Seventeenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000) for many stimulating insights into Keating’s milieu, his work, his construction of a Catholic Irish perspective on the past and the later dissemination and reception of his work in both Irish and English forms. See also Ó Buachalla, “An Comhtheacs Comhaimseartha.”
  - 30 A total of over five thousand Irish-language manuscripts are extant, with three great periods of blossoming: the twelfth century; the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries and the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The seventeenth-century material constitutes a kind of bridge or plateau between the late medieval and modern manuscript collections. My thanks to Dr. Neil Buttimer, University College Cork, for discussions on these and many related matters in this paper. See also Raymond Gillespie, “Introduction” and Ruairí Ó hUiginn, “Transmitting the text: some linguistic issues in the work of the Franciscans” in Gillespie and Ó hUiginn, *Irish Europe*, 1–15, 93–95.
  - 31 Leerssen, *Mere Irish and Fíor-Ghael*, 274.
  - 32 Ó Buachalla, “An Comhtheacs Comhaimseartha,” 75, 97; see also Caball, “Lost in translation: reading Keating’s *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*’ in *Oral and Print Cultures in Ireland 1600–1900*, eds. Marc Caball and Andrew Carpenter, eds., (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2010), 47–68; which illuminates how Keating’s text was interpreted in three different English translations between 1635 and 1841; and Vincent Morley, “The Popular influence of *Foras Feasa ar Éireann* from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries,” in *Irish and English: Essays on the Irish Linguistic and Cultural Frontier*, eds. James Kelly and Ciarán Mac Murchaidh (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2012), 96–116.
  - 33 A.L. Rowse, “The Elizabethan Discovery of England,” in Rowse, *The England of Elizabeth* (London: Macmillan, 1950), 49–86; Bernard Klein, *Maps and the Writing of Space in Early Modern England and Ireland* (Basingstoke, United Kingdom: Palgrave Press, 2001).
  - 34 John J. O’Meara, ed. and transl., *The First Version of the Topography of Ireland by Giraldus Cambrensis* (Dundalk: Dundalgan Press, 1951).
  - 35 C.P. Meehan, *The Fate and Fortunes of Hugh O’Neill, Earl of Tyrone and Rory O’Donnell, Earl of Tyrconnell* (Dublin: James Duffy, 1868), 328, quoted by Ó Buachalla, “An Comhtheacs Comhaimseartha,” 81.
  - 36 George Carew, ‘A Discourse of the Present Estate of Ireland 1614’, *Calendar of Carew Mss*, 1603–14: 305–6.
  - 37 Edmund Spenser, *A View*. See also Andrew Hadfield and William Maley, eds., *Edmund Spenser: A View of the State of Ireland* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 1997).
  - 38 Ó Buachalla, *Aisling Ghéar*, 90–98. See also Brendan Ó Doibhlin, *Manuail de Litríocht na Gaeilge: Faisicil III: An “Lá idir dhá Shíon”: 1616–1641* (Beann Éadair: Coiscéim, 2007).
  - 39 Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), Chapter 3



- "Resistance and Opposition," 230-340, especially 241.
- 40 Micheál Ó Siochrú and Jane Ohlmeyer at Trinity College Dublin in conjunction with Thomas Bartlett, Aberdeen University, John Morrill, Cambridge University, and Aidan Clarke, Trinity College Dublin, completed The 1641 Depositions Project in 2010 which means that all 33 volumes of the depositions are now freely available online <http://1641.tcd.ie>. See also their editing of *Ireland: 1641*.
  - 41 Smyth, *Map-Making*, 160-163. See also L.M. Cullen, "[Population Trends in Seventeenth Century Ireland](#)," *Economic and Social Review* 6, no. 2 (1975): 149-165.
  - 42 Ó Siochrú and Ohlmeyer, *Ireland: 1641*.
  - 43 Cecile O'Rahilly, ed., *Five Seventeenth Century Political Poems* (Dublin: Irish Institute for Advanced Studies, 1977).
  - 44 The translation is from Leerssen, *Mere Irish*, 211.
  - 45 O'Rahilly ed., *Political Poems*. The five poems are: *Do frith, monuar, an uain si ar Éirinn* (An opportunity arose, alas, to reduce Ireland); *An Síogaí Rómhánach* (The Irish Vision of Rome) which could be described as a very early aisling poem; *Aiste Dháibhí Cúnduín* (David Condon's poem); *Tuireamh na hÉireann* (The Lament for Ireland) and *Mo lá leóin go deó go néagad* (My day of sadness, forever, until I die). These poems were composed between 1640-41 and 1658, that is during the rising/rebellion and the subsequent Cromwellian conquest.
  - 46 Kurt Ross, ed., *Codex Mendoza: Aztec Manuscript* (Fribourg, Switzerland: Liber, 1978-84). Large numbers of the Aztec painted books, including their chronicles, annals and other land records were destroyed by Spanish military action when the libraries of the defeated Aztec towns were burnt down; see also Nathan Wachtel, *The Vision of the Vanquished: The Spanish Conquest of Peru through Indian Eyes, 1530-1570* (Brighton, United Kingdom: Harvester Press, 1977) for the story of the destruction of Incan civilization.
  - 47 Ibid., 75. At least 130 different manuscript versions of *Tuireamh na hÉireann* still survive.
  - 48 Ibid.
  - 49 Neil Buttimer, "Literature in Irish, 1690-1800: From the Williamite Wars to the Act of Union" in *The Cambridge History of Irish Literature*, eds. Margaret Kelleher and Philip O'Leary (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 322-327. See also Ó Tuama and Kinsella, "Introduction," in *An Duanaire 1600-1900*, eds. Ó Tuama and Kinsella, xxvii-xxxiii; see also Brendan Ó Doibhlin, *Manuail de Litríocht na Gaeilge: Faisicil IV 1641-1704: Dísealbhú and Faisicil V 1704-1750: An Dubhaois* (Beann Éadair: Coiscéim, 2008, 2009).
  - 50 Ibid., xxvii and xxi.
  - 51 Robert Lowell, *Life Studies* and *For the Union Dead* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1967) and *Day by Day* (London: Faber and Faber, 1978).
  - 52 Ó Tuama and Kinsella, *An Duanaire 1600-1900*, 23.
  - 53 Ibid., 85.
  - 54 Ibid., 105-109.
  - 55 Ibid., 173.
  - 56 See Declan Kiberd's commentary on Jonathan Swift in Kiberd, *Irish Classics* (London: Granta Books, 2000).
  - 57 This description is based on materials in *An Duanaire 1600-1900* especially 21-23 and *Mere Irish and Fíor-Ghael*, 192-193.
  - 58 Ó Tuama and Kinsella, *An Duanaire 1600-1900*, 110-123 and 140-167.
  - 59 Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*.
  - 60 Nessa M. Cronin, "The Eye of History Spatiality and Colonial Cartography in Ireland," PhD thesis, National University of Ireland, 2007 is insightful about alienation and dislocation from the homeplace.
  - 61 Ó Tuama and Kinsella, *An Duanaire 1600-1900*, xxvii-xxix, 152 and 187.

- 62 Gearóid Ó Cruaí, *The Book of the Cailleach: Stories of the Wise-Woman Healer* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2003), 7–13.
- 63 Ibid., 61.
- 64 Smyth, *Map-Making*, 410–415. See also Morley, Ó Chéitinn go Raiftearaí: *Mar a Cumadh Stair na hÉireann* (Beann Éadair: Coiscéim, 2011).
- 65 B. Hudnall Stamm, Henry E. Stamm, Amy C. Hudnall and Craig Higson-Smith, “[Considering a Theory of Cultural Trauma and Loss](#),” *Journal of Loss and Trauma: International Perspectives on Stress and Coping* 9, no. 1 (2004): 89–111. This paper also provided a model for the making of Figure 4.
- 66 Garrett O’Connor, *Recognising and Healing Malignant Shame* (2010), available at <http://v1.zonezero.com/magazine/essays/distant/zreco2.html> (accessed 1 June 2014) has been helpful to my understanding of these issues as has been discussion with other colleagues, particularly Maria Huss.
- 67 This section is based on a detailed analysis of entries in the *Annals of the Four Masters* between the years 1460 and 1539.
- 68 Smyth, *Map-Making*, 59.
- 69 Catherine Nash, “Historical Geographies of Modernity,” in *Modern Historical Geographies*, eds. Brian Graham and Catherine Nash (Harlow, United Kingdom: Prentice Hall, 2000), 10–40, 17–18.
- 70 This summary is based on an analysis of the *Annals of the Four Masters* from the year 1540 to 1600.
- 71 Dunne, “Gaelic Response,” 7–30; Caball, *Poets and Politics*.
- 72 Kevin Whelan, “[The Catholic Parish, the Catholic Chapel and Village Development in Ireland](#),” *Irish Geography* 16, no. 1 (1983): 1–15.
- 73 Evelin G. Lindner, “Genocides, Humiliation and Inferiority: An Inter-disciplinary Perspective,” in *Genocides of the Oppressed: Subaltern Genocides in Theory and Practice*, eds. N.A. Robins and Adam Jones (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2009), 138–158.
- 74 Ibid., 150–151.
- 75 This theme is explored more fully in the concluding chapter of Smyth, *Map-Making*, 451–469.
- 76 See Smyth, *Map-Making*, 7–8, 162–163 and 167–169 which documents both Edmund Spenser’s and some Cromwellian officers arguments for the uprooting, and if necessary, the eradication of the “wild Irish.”
- 77 For a more comprehensive analysis of these adaptations see concluding chapter in: Smyth, *Map-Making*, 451–469.
- 78 Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*; Said, *Cultural Imperialism*, 230–340; Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (London: Earthscan Publications, 1990 [1965]).
- 79 O’Connor, *Recognising and Healing Malignant Shame*; see also Geraldine Moane, “[A Psychological Analysis of Colonialism in an Irish Context](#),” *Irish Journal of Psychology* 15, nos. 2–3 (1994): 250–265 for an insightful survey of the psychological literature, and Michael Cronin, *Irish in the New Century* (Dublin: Cois Life Teoranta, 2005) 37–42. My thanks to an tOllamh Máirín Ní Dhonchada, National University of Ireland, Galway, for drawing my attention to this reference and other materials.
- 80 Ibid.
- 81 John Crowley, William J. Smyth and Mike Murphy, *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine 1845–1852* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2012).

# Writing the “New Geography”: Cartographic Discourse and Colonial Governmentality in William Petty’s *The Political Anatomy of Ireland* (1672)

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**ABSTRACT:** Within the context of historical geography, William Petty (1623-87) is almost exclusively known for his mapmaking activities as the Director of the Down Survey (1654-6) and is less well known for his theories on political economy, populations and productivity. While Petty’s achievements have been historically examined within various disciplinary contexts, this interdisciplinary paper seeks to link two key elements of his career (mapmaking and political writings) and argues that his experiences in Ireland largely shaped the trajectory of what he later termed as “political arithmetic.” In offering a re-appraisal of William Petty’s “cartographic discourse” in *The Political Anatomy of Ireland* (1672), this paper links the mapping of the forfeited lands of Catholic Ireland, the development of a nascent form of colonial geopolitics and governmentality, the gendering of a political anatomy, to the emergence of “political arithmetic” as a new instrument of state. The paper is primarily concerned with cartographic discourse of the “new geography” of late seventeenth-century Ireland, and explores the implications of re-reading Petty’s political writings on Ireland. It extends observations by Patricia Coughlan (1990), Hugh Goodacre (2008, 2009), and Ted McCormick (2010) in terms of highlighting the colonial context of Petty’s work, and views Petty’s *Political Anatomy* as a nascent form of colonial governmentality specifically concerned with securing and regulating the Irish “colony” through the management of the mobility and conduct of its population. In opening up the connections between Petty’s scientific training in continental Europe, his mapping experiences in Ireland, and his development of “political arithmetic,” this paper offers an alternative genealogy of the history of political economy that is disruptive in highlighting its colonialist “origins” by re-evaluating Petty’s cartographic discourse on Ireland.

## Mapping Ireland, reading Petty

Within the context of historical geography, William Petty (1623-87) is almost exclusively known for his mapmaking activities as the Director of the Down Survey and is less well known for his theories on populations and productivity. As economic historian Cormac Ó Gráda observes, Petty “is best remembered by Irish economic historians for his estimates of population and income and by geographers for his maps and surveys. In both fields he was a pioneer, and his work forms the starting-point for all subsequent inquiries.”<sup>1</sup> In stressing the historical connections between geography and economics, Hugh Goodacre argues that there is an additional challenge to the reading of Petty’s work as being a precursor of modern spatial economic analysis, in that the focus has been predominantly on English-language accounts of the European history of political economy. In what he calls “The William Petty Problem” (translating the nineteenth-century German debate of “Das Adam Smith Problem”), Goodacre argues that



French economic historians have not only included, but foregrounded, Petty's contribution to the evolution of the sub-discipline of political economy, but that their work has been to a large degree under-read or neglected by historians whose work is anglophone-centred.<sup>2</sup>

While Petty's achievements have been examined within various disciplinary contexts, this paper seeks to link two key elements of his career and argues that his experiences in Ireland largely shaped the trajectory of what he later termed in his writings as "political arithmetic." While the *exclusive* nature of this relationship (the influence that the natural sciences and contemporary philosophical thought had on the development of Petty's ideas must also be acknowledged) is not being posited here, what is argued however is that the arc of development of Petty's "political arithmetic" has to be read within the context of early modern colonial Ireland. The importance of Baconian induction, Hobbesian social theory, and the "new science" of mechanistic philosophy that Petty adapted and applied to his theories concerning Ireland has been well noted and documented by scholars such as Mary Poovey, Hugh Goodacre, and most recently by Ted McCormick in his *William Petty and the Ambitions of Political Arithmetic*, which is "simultaneously an intellectual biography of Petty [...] and a critique of the new science of 'political arithmetic'."<sup>3</sup>

The Down Survey (1654-6) was a monumental task in military organization and land surveying; a cartographic leviathan that stretched across the landscape of Ireland and would not be surpassed, in geographic, legal or cultural terms, until the achievements of the Ordnance Survey were published almost two centuries later. The Survey entailed the division of the country into new, legal administrative boundaries, and as William J. Smyth has argued, simultaneously demanded the re-formation of the Gaelic Irish land divisions and ownership of over half of the country. This effective "desocialization of Gaelic Irish space," which commenced in earnest with the Tudor re-conquest of Ireland in the middle decades of the 1500s, also worked to consolidate the gains made after the Ulster Plantation in 1609 and the Cromwellian wars later in that century.<sup>4</sup> It is argued here that William Petty, through his cartographic work and political narratives, was a key architect in the building and shaping of the colonial geopolitics of seventeenth-century Ireland. This article focuses less on the cartographic history of the maps of the Down Survey than on the *cartographic discourse* of the survey and the implications for Petty's political writings on Ireland. In addition, to open up the connections between Petty's scientific training in continental Europe, his mapping experiences in Ireland, and his development of "political arithmetic" is to consider an alternative genealogy of political economy that is disruptive in highlighting its colonialist "origins." Such a genealogical re-routing implies a distinct shift from the received Enlightenment narrative of political economy through the figure of Adam Smith, and grounds one rhizomatic root of that family tree firmly in the soil of early modern colonial Ireland.<sup>5</sup>

Reading and interpreting Petty's work as a whole therefore demands cross-disciplinary research, a multilingual toolkit and much archival patience. A concern with the historiography and critical analysis of this period is also observed by Patricia Coughlan. Coughlan maintains that "there has not yet been any significant attempt to investigate the various writings of the period in themselves as symbolic representations (as distinct from seeing them as relatively inert and transparently readable pieces of evidence for the views or political positions of various factions)."<sup>6</sup> Any contemporary critical analysis must be mindful of the epistemological challenges and theoretical fault-lines that such an approach demands. As McCormick writes:

Economists can study Petty's economics, Irish historians his role in Ireland, and historians of science his contributions to the Royal Society; but connecting these things and assessing their relationships requires mastering literatures that have developed along separate lines, printed sources that come pre-packaged for subdisciplinary use, and manuscript sources that have, until recently, been hard to consult at all. Bringing in the still wider range of interests that Petty's manuscripts reveal is no easy task.<sup>7</sup>

While McCormack focuses mainly on the scientific origins and political writings of Petty, and does not foreground the cartographic impulse and origins of his writings *per se*, I would like to foreground both the cartographic imaginary operating in the writings on political arithmetic with an emphasis on Petty's deployment of language. Petty's writings and cartographic work attempted an all-encompassing *cartographic discourse* on Ireland, a discourse that is deeply embedded within the typologies of English writing on Ireland from the renaissance to early modern periods. I would also like to extend the observations and the much-welcomed colonial contextualisation of Petty's work made by Goodacre, and to view Petty's work as a nascent form not just of governmentality (control over populations) but of a *colonial governmentality* specifically concerned with securing and regulating a colony through the mobility and conduct of its population.

The links then between the mapping of Catholic Ireland, the development of a nascent form of colonial geopolitics and governmentality, the gendering of a political anatomy, and finally the emergence of "political arithmetic" as a new instrument of state (for use crucially both at home and abroad), are brought into sharp relief and explored here through Petty's cartographic discourse in his *The Political Anatomy of Ireland* (1672). As Goodacre argues,

Petty's survey of Ireland must surely be recognised as a pivotal episode in the history of the relationship between economic and geographical thought, an episode which, furthermore, places in the highest possible relief the inextricable connection of his spatial-economic analysis with the context in which he forged it, a context of bureaucratic-military officialdom and predatory colonialism.<sup>8</sup>

### **Soldiers, surveyors, speculators: William Petty and the Down Survey (1654-6)**

Petty was born on 26 May 1623, the son of a Hampshire trader. His rise to later success and peerage was a mark both of his own character and of the age in which he lived. From inauspicious beginnings, Petty rose to become the physician-general to Oliver Cromwell's army, a celebrity physician, an advocate of a state-funded medical system and a national identity card, the inventor of the catamaran, and a founding member of the Royal Society, to name but a few of his achievements.<sup>9</sup> In 1637, he went to sea as a cabin-boy and after ten months and injured with a broken leg, he was put ashore in France where he was educated by the Jesuits at Caen. In demonstrating his future entrepreneurial spirit, he paid for his education by selling beeswax and hair hats, and by playing cards. Interestingly, considering the religious politics of the period, it was to this Catholic education that he owed his knowledge of Latin, Greek, French and mathematics. Without the fundamental building blocks of his Jesuit education, it could be argued, Petty's rise would not have been so swift, nor so spectacular.

In the 1640s, Petty resumed his studies in Paris where he became acquainted with figures associated with the famous Mersenne Circle which included luminaries such as Descartes, Fermat, Pascal and Gassendi. In 1645 he was reading Vesalius with Thomas Hobbes, and working on the drawings for Hobbes's *Optics*, which demonstrated his acquaintance and knowledge of the work of what would become known as the "new science." Indeed, in his portrait in his Doctor of Medicine gown by the artist Issac Fuller, he is shown with a skull in one hand and Vesalius' book on anatomy laid open for inspection beside him.<sup>10</sup> Knowledge was thus something to be demonstrated both in theory and in practice, to be revealed in print, and illustrated on the page or canvas for public inspection, consumption and circulation. Petty was introduced to the chemist and physicist Robert Boyle in 1646 through his friend Samuel Hartlib, a German refugee who advocated the application of science to social and economic needs and whose methodologies may later have influenced Petty.<sup>11</sup> During this period, Petty travelled and studied medicine in Utrecht, Leyden, Amsterdam and Paris, and his French and Dutch experiences would particularly

reverberate later throughout his work in physical anatomy and his theories of political arithmetic. In 1650 he was appointed Professor of Anatomy at Oxford, and also Professor of Music at Gresham College, London, later becoming Physician General to Cromwell's army in Ireland in 1652. The purpose of anatomy was, he wrote, primarily to show the mechanistic nature of the "enginry" of "man."<sup>12</sup>

Petty, as McCormick wryly states, "had a very high opinion on his own abilities, an opinion widely but not universally shared."<sup>13</sup> While Petty, in a letter to his friend Sir Roger Southwell in 1681, may have bemoaned the fact that his audience "are as deaf as haddocks," the history of his life and writings is also a history of early modern science and print culture, and more importantly in Petty's case, the history of manuscript circulation and networks of learned societies. The lamentation regarding the "deaf ears" of his audience was undoubtedly related to the fact that for much of his life Petty was embroiled in personal debates and legal disputes regarding the legitimacy of his Irish estates acquired after he completed the Survey. In addition, his ideas concerning political arithmetic were arguably too large-ranging and overly ambitious for the short-term political life of Restoration England.

The Down Survey was to be the means by which Petty made his fortune, but in this he was not without his detractors. In 1652, Petty's income totalled £800 per year, with a private fortune estimated at £480. By the time he had completed the survey a decade later, Emil Strauss estimates that Petty had cash resources amounting to £13,060, and was drawing a rental income of £4,200 a year from his Irish lands.<sup>14</sup> Clearly, Petty's mapmaking exploits in Ireland and subsequent purchase of land formed the basis for his later financial success. This did not go unnoticed by his contemporaries, nor by his critics who were deeply suspicious of the ways in which Petty obtained vast amounts of profitable Irish land. The survey became known as the Down Survey as the surveyors were instructed to ascertain the boundaries of any "parcell of forfeited lands" so that, "the same may be drawne and sett downe by you in a touch plott [map]."<sup>15</sup> It was therefore a survey that was to be "sett downe" visually on maps and textually in terriers, and was not to be simply a list of tabulated information as was the case in previous surveys.<sup>16</sup> The name "Down Survey" was applied to the maps by the Lord Lieutenant and the Privy Council in 1658, and has been officially retained ever since.<sup>17</sup> Over one thousand people were employed in a process that took just over thirteen months to survey all the land held by Catholic proprietors at the outbreak of the rebellion in 1641; this covering about 47.5 percent of the land of the country (later estimated to be nearly 8,400,000 acres).<sup>18</sup> With the deployment of soldiers in measuring boundary lines, the Survey was run along efficient military lines.<sup>19</sup> As highlighted by William J. Smyth, the process of "conquest, confiscation and colonization" was paved by soldiers, surveyors and speculators alike.<sup>20</sup>

### **"A commin Knife and a Clout:" Dissecting Ireland's Political Anatomy**

Three years after completing the maps for the Down Survey, Petty wrote of how religious reform in Ireland could be made possible with the advent of "the new Geography". In the preface to *A Treatise of Taxes & Contributions* [...] *The same being frequently applied to the present State and Affairs of Ireland* (1662), Petty wrote:

The parishes of *Ireland* do much want Regulation, by uniting and dividing them; so as to make them fit Enclosures wherein to plant the Gospel; wherefore what I have said as to the danger of supernumerary Ministers, may also be seasonable there, when *the new Geography* we expect of that Island shall have afforded means for the Regulation abovementioned. [*Italics in original.*]<sup>21</sup>



The Good Word could thus be planted within the “Enclosures” of the parish, but this was dependent upon the “new Geography,” which provided the space in which this new ecclesiastical history could be written. This was written in a rhetorical mode of an imagined geography, when the new geography “we expect of that Island *shall* have afforded” (my emphasis) would allow for such “regulation” in the future. Petty would later ignore the idea of resistance to such culturally transformative policies a decade later in his *The Political Anatomy of Ireland* with its recommendations for the forcible transplanting of people from one country to another in order to develop the economic growth of England and Ireland and which also, by extension, crucially provided a ready stream of labor for the colonies overseas. Significantly, he placed the use of the map as the second most important item to consider and utilize when enquiring into the conditions of a country, thus acknowledging the instrumental use of cartography as necessary tool of government, a convention that had been established in Ireland in the previous century, in particular through the work of Lord Burghley, William Cecil.<sup>22</sup>

The dramatic changes to the Irish political and human landscape after decades of wars, famine and the forced displacement of the native populations were noted and referenced in the *Political Anatomy*. Here, the large-scale change in native settlement was placed in direct relation to the “destruction of people:”

Now if it could be known what number of people were in Ireland, *Ann.* 1641, then the difference between said number, and 850 [M.], adding unto it the encrease by Generation, in 11 years will shew the destruction of the people made by the Wars, *viz.*, by the Sword, Plague, and Famine occasioned thereby [...] It follows also, that about 504 M. of the Irish perished, and were wasted by the Sword, Plague, Famine, Hardship and Banishment, between the 23 October 1641 and the same day 1652.<sup>23</sup>

The rhetoric of the laying waste of Irish land with the, “destruction of the people [...] by the Sword, Plague and Famine,” strongly recalled Edmund Spenser’s infamous account of the Desmond Wars in Munster in the Elizabethan period as does his deep suspicion of language and its use.<sup>24</sup> While lands such as these were interpreted as being laid “waste”, it is no surprise then that the idea of Ireland as *tabula rasa*, as white paper or blank space, occurred in English writings on Ireland in this period. Petty referred to Ireland in the 1660s as a legal and cartographic blank space. In 1662, he argued that “when *Ireland* is as a white paper,”<sup>25</sup> then, the Duke of Ormond will “pass into Positive Laws whatsoever is right reason and the Law of Nature,” (giving another resonance to the term *carte blanche*).<sup>26</sup> However much Petty could project into the future the notion of an Ireland emptied of its Gaelic Irish populations and of its social and cultural systems of land, law and religious practices, the “when” of this speculative statement was a problem that would remain largely unresolved. The issue was not that Ireland would be entirely “emptied of the majority of its inhabitants as Petty had advocated,”<sup>27</sup> but the recognition that while there may be a new geography there was still a very old history, with the additional question of labor being required to work the land to extract resources from it. The real problem, as T.C. Barnard points out, was that “Ireland was not a *tabula rasa*. There were old institutions; there was a native population, both Protestant and Catholic, whose support was necessary to any regime’s permanence.”<sup>28</sup> While the Down Survey made a claim to a certain kind of geographical “realism”, the political and cultural assumptions that were obscured in the maps were foregrounded in corresponding cartographic narratives (map terriers, official documents, and administrative letters).<sup>29</sup>

The proposed land confiscations and transplantations were however, as Smyth argues, not as successful as initially planned. While the “clearing” of the confiscated lands in the creation of this new geography may have been a rhetorical flourish, the more practical question remained

as to who would actually work the eleven million acres that were to be assiduously cleared? Assessments for the need of labor and, in particular cheap and readily available labor, meant that as the 1650s progressed "more realistic adjustments were made as to who would be obliged to transplant and who might be permitted to remain."<sup>30</sup> And so, "requests to retain Irish tenants, artisans and labourers flooded into the Dublin administration from the representatives of the 'reserved' counties."<sup>31</sup> Smyth states that only one in eight landowners in Munster ended up in Connacht and that "a great many old Irish families held their ground, survived, and adapted to the new landlord regimes."<sup>32</sup> In examining the 1659 Census, he contends that "it would appear that close on 60 per cent of the adventurer grantees had not settled in their allocated baronies by 1660. Only about one-fifth had actually settled," and also significantly that some of the old Catholic families had "slipped back home from 'exile' in Connacht as well."<sup>33</sup>

While the maps of the *Hiberniae delineatio* were being engraved, Petty was writing his treatise *Political Arithmetic* (1671, published posthumously in 1690), and *The Political Anatomy of Ireland, with the Establishment for that Kingdom and Verbum Sapienti* (1672, published posthumously in 1691).<sup>34</sup> In the preface to the *Political Arithmetic*, Petty outlined the details of his particular approach to interpreting the "perplexed and intricate Ways of the World:"

The Method I take to do this, is not yet very usual; for instead of using only comparative and superlative Words, and intellectual Arguments, I have taken the Course (as a Specimen of the Political Arithmetick I have long aimed at) to express myself in Terms of *Number, Weight, or Measure*; to use only Arguments of Sense, and to confide only such Causes, as have visible Foundations in Nature; leaving those that depend upon the mutable Minds, Opinions, Appetites, and Passions of particular Men, to the Considerations of others [...].<sup>35</sup>

The "number, weight and measure" of the *Political Arithmetic* in 1671 was to be drawn up a year later in line with the idea of the "symmetry, fabric and proportion" of the state as described in the *Political Anatomy*. This book was an examination of the political, religious, economic and social structures of a particular country as case-study, with Ireland being chosen as the site for this experimental investigation.<sup>36</sup> Here the rhetoric of the dissection of the colonial body politic performed a clear framing device for the treatise. One may well ask the question why did Petty focus on the "new geography" of a colony, and not write a political anatomy of the English state? The Preface answered this in part. He explained to the reader that: "*I have chosen Ireland as such a Political Animal, who is scarce Twenty years old; where the Intrigue of State is not very complicate and with which I have been conversant from an Embricon.*"<sup>37</sup> The glossing over of the decades of "Sword, Plague and Famine" that Petty had previously referred to, marked his determination to read Ireland as a "white paper" which is scarce twenty years old, and thus was conveniently absolved of bearing the weight of any determinable history, "complicate" or otherwise.<sup>38</sup>

Petty drew attention to the influence of Bacon, his training in the medical sciences, and introduced the idea of reading and writing about the body politic of Ireland in terms of an anatomical body, an experiment waiting to be dissected with the instrument of political anatomy:

*Sir Francis Bacon, in his Advancement of Learning, hath made a judicious Parallel in many particulars, between the Body Natural, and Body Politick, and between the Arts of preserving both in Health and Strength: And it is as reasonable, that as Anatomy is the best foundation of one, so also of the other; and that to practice upon the Politick, without knowing the Symmetry, Fabrick, and Proportion of it, is as casual as the practice of Old-women and Empricks. [Italics in original.]*<sup>39</sup>

The argument made here is that the use of a general principle in one area should then also be equally applicable to another, with the "Body Natural" being translated into the "Body

Politick." Moreover, the "practice upon the Politick" was seen as based on the "casual", as opposed to expert, knowledge of "Old-women and Empyricks", and as running the risk of ignorance and of damaging the health of that very body under investigation.<sup>40</sup> In the next paragraph, he stressed his political neutrality in positing such matters: "I therefore, who profess no Politicks, have, for my curiosity, at large attempted the first Essay of Political Anatomy."<sup>41</sup>

Petty's "curiosity" was thus maintained from the outset as a professional, scientific curiosity, based on his objective experiences in Ireland. He drew an analogy between the "*cheap and common Animals*" that students of anatomy practice upon, and Ireland as "*such a Political Animal*," thus reinforcing the shameful status of the body to be openly displayed in such investigations. In a move that echoed Irenius' privileging discourse of experience in Spenser's *A View of the Present State of Ireland* (1590), it is Petty's own experience of that country with which he is "*conversant*," that ironically provided him with the necessary "evidence" and authority for such an investigation. The narrative "I" of the discourse collapsed the boundary between "objective" vision and the narrative voice, to the point where the subjective narrative provided an authenticated experience that added the aura of truth and knowledge to the pronouncements that follow. The value of experience over that of received knowledge gained precedence in this new world of the "new science" and the Royal Society. In bemoaning the fact that there was a lack of "proper Instruments," he settled for the blunt instrument of a "commin Knife and a Clout" (which was understood as being "political arithmetick"), and which was evident throughout the work in the dissection of the socio- and geo-political body of Ireland:

*Tis true, that curious Dissections cannot be made without variety of proper Instruments; whereas I have had only a commin Knife and a Clout, instead of the many more helps which such a Work requires: However, my rude approaches being enough to find whereabouts the Liver and Spleen, and Lungs lye, tho' not to discern the Lymphatick Vessels, the Plexus, Choroidus, the Volvuli of vessels within the Testicles; yet not knowing, that even what I have here readily done, was much considered, or indeed thought useful by others, I have ventur'd to begin a new Work, which, when Corrected and Enlarged by better Hands and Helps, I believe will tend to the Peace and Plenty of my Country; besides which, I have no other end. [Italics in original.]*<sup>42</sup>

Petty was self-consciously aware that there was a lack of a sophisticated language (only the use of the "common" instruments of the barber/surgeon were available to him) but he was firm in the belief that here was the beginning of a new discourse in which to describe the world, the instrumental method being political arithmetic and the object of scrutiny being Ireland.

Petty's *Political Anatomy* dealt with topics such as land ownership, trade, religion and language. The first chapter, "*Of the Lands of Ireland*," gave an account of the amount of land in Ireland and its value, noting for his English audience that, "whereof 121 Acres makes 196 English measure."<sup>43</sup> As land values were outlined, the transportation of the Irish to Spain and Barbados was mentioned which set up the next stage of the argument—the value of the inhabitants of Ireland. The Irish were valued in relation to "Slaves and Negroes" who are "usually rated [...] one with another," so that the "value of the people will be about 10,355,000 l."<sup>44</sup> This concern (that of the value of a people) was central to Petty's concept of political arithmetic, and would later be discussed in more detail in his last work *A Treatise of Ireland*. Petty argued that given the present conditions in Ireland, "the Irish will not easily rebel again."<sup>45</sup> This was set against the somewhat genocidal intent of some "furious Spirits" who "have wished, that the Irish would rebel again, that they might be put to the sword."<sup>46</sup>

Petty continued by commenting on the advantage of the "declining of all Military means of settling [sic] and securing *Ireland* in peace and plenty, what we offer shall tend to the transmuting



of one People into the other, and the thorough union of Interests upon natural and lasting Principles."<sup>47</sup> This marked a distinct and significant shift in the proposed treatment and control of Ireland, from the outright domination of military conquest to the control of the population through hegemonic means by securing consent and acquiescence. The "transmuting of one People into the other" had one central motivation behind it, the maximization of labor in order to benefit the state. This "transmutation" was not to come about solely through a process of acculturation or assimilation, but was to be primarily effected through enforced mobility and transmigration, through the physical dislocation and displacement of large bodies of the population across the two islands of the archipelago, which would additionally serve to consolidate "Union" between the two nations. The physical translation of bodies across the Irish Sea would then ensure the cultural translation and political assimilation of such populations. This would come about, suggested Petty, by exchanging two hundred thousand Irish people with their British counterparts.

It is important to note that there is a particular *gendering* to this "transmutation" that demands further critical scrutiny. Of the six hundred thousand people in Ireland that Petty described as living "in the wretched way above mentioned," he estimated that there were:

[N]ot above 20 M. of unmarried marriageable Women [...]. Whereof if  $\frac{1}{2}$  the said Women were in one year, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  the next transported into England and disposed of one to each Parish, and as many English brought back and married to the Irish, as would improve their Dwelling but to an House and Garden of 3 l. value, the whole Work of Natural Transmutation and Union would in 4 or 5 years be accomplished. The charge of making the exchange would not be 20,000 l. per Ann. which is about 6 Weeks Pay of the present or late Armies in Ireland.<sup>48</sup>

Petty never envisaged any objection, or resistance, to such plans of exchange and forcible transplantation from either the Irish or, for that matter, the English who were to be equally subjected to displacement. The forced exchange would be a highly gendered one, with single women playing a vital role in integrating and creating the next generation of labor to produce, reproduce and circulate; a mobile, transnational labor force was now figured as being the life-blood of the "nation." The plan was seen primarily as securing the political health of Ireland, and therefore of England, in terms of a mutually beneficial relationship. In offering a kind of cost-benefit analysis in terms of overall advantages, the proposal was presented as being a more peaceful (and thus economical) way of gaining much-needed stability in Ireland as opposed to the instability wrought by costly wars of previous decades, in costing only "about 6 Weeks Pay of the present or late Armies in Ireland."

The final and total translation of the Irish people would come about, Petty argued, with the sustained use of the English language in that primary nucleus of the body politic, the family. In a statement that again recalled Spenser and other renaissance writers on Ireland, he wrote: "[W]hen the Language of the Children shall be English, and the whole Oeconomy of the Family English, viz. Diet, Apperel, &c. the Transmutation will be very easy and quick."<sup>49</sup> That the etymological origins of "Oeconomy" were derived from *oikos* (house) and *nomia* (from *nemein*, to manage) would not have been lost on Petty in his consideration of the domestic element of the economy in relation to the "Family." The economic translation of the people seems then to be linked if not contingent to the "transmutation," or forking, of the native and mother tongue.

The spatial context of an Atlantic Ireland was never far from Petty's mind. His repeated emphasis on Ireland's geographical location between England and the colonies of the New World showed his concern for an efficient mode of operating trade both domestically and between

the colonies. The “fitness of Ireland for Trade” lay in that, “Ireland lieth Commodiously for the Trade of the new American world; which we see everyday to Grow and Flourish. It lyeth well for sending Butter, Cheese, Beef, Fish, to their proper Markets, which are to the Southward, and the Plantations of America.”<sup>50</sup> The colonial analogy is further explicitly stated when Petty called for an increasing of trade between Ireland and England, and compared Ireland to the West Indies: “[W]e should do to Trade between the Two Kingdoms, as the Spaniards in the West-Indies do to all other Nations.”<sup>51</sup> Bowls of oatmeal became negotiated in terms of bowls of rice. Foodstuffs were one of the main elements of trade between the colonies, and so one could be traded against the other, “[b]ut if Rice be brought out of India into Ireland, or Oatmeal carried from Ireland thither; then in India the pint of Oatmeal must be dearer than half a pint of Rice, by the freight and hazard of Carriage.”<sup>52</sup>

### Colonial governmentality

Michel Foucault’s broad argument for tracing a genealogy of governmentality to the eighteenth century may have merit in the context of the European metropole, but in the context of a colonial geography I would argue that forms of governmentality as outlined by Foucault can be traced much earlier to the work of Petty and his experiences in seventeenth-century Ireland.<sup>53</sup> While recent discussions of Foucault’s writings on governmentality have focused on reiterating his genealogy of statecraft to designate this shift that commences in the eighteenth century, an alternative narrative is posited here, in being one that incorporates the site of the colonial (*within* European space) which may also take into account the notable absence of “territory” in Foucault’s now famous “Governmentality” lecture. With regard to the question of “what happens to territory?” as noted by Stuart Elden,<sup>54</sup> it seems that from the eighteenth century onwards territory is now *assumed* to be the stage upon which history acts, and state concern is now focused on “controlling the mass of the population on its territory rather than controlling territoriality as such.”<sup>55</sup> By this time, it is argued, population, its quantification and its control, is now the main focus once treaties had been signed, borders consolidated, and states mapped. Following this line of argument, European territory after Westphalia no longer had to be “taken,” but could instead now be *taken for granted*.

If Foucault’s argument of governmentality has at its core three main points of discussion—these being the transition from feudal sovereignty to that of governmentality, the concerns of territory becoming that of population, and the control and retention of land transferring to control of social bodies inhabiting such lived geographies—then the work of Petty on Ireland would seem to fit all three criteria, but in an earlier context of seventeenth-century colonial Ireland. Historically, the shift from sovereign to governmental power can explicitly be traced to the English Interregnum, the power of parliament in the context of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland in the period after the Civil War and the execution of Charles I, under the protectorate of Cromwell’s New Model Army (1653–9), with the restoration of the monarchy coming with Charles II in 1660. The shift from a concern of territory to that of population may be seen throughout the political writings of Petty, where territory was treated as given or “taken for granted” (lands confiscated, resources mapped), but now however it was the category of “population” (particularly the remaining Catholic Gaelic Irish population) which was the problem. And finally, the shift from the control of land to the control of bodily movement and social behavior—seen in Petty’s writings on the “transmutation” of the Irish, on planting the Protestant faith upon the *tabula rasa* of the “new geography” of plantation Ireland, and in terms of the proposed changes of “language, religion and manners”—completed the circle of colonial biopower and governmentality with regard to the mobility and conduct of the population.

One could argue that the absence of "other" spaces in Foucault's analysis was a logical outcome of his lack of any sustained critical analysis of the role of the colonies in the construction of the European metropolitan core. As geographers, historians and critical theorists have noted, Foucault's work demands to be continually contextualized but the generality that is implied in his work on governmentality seems to be a generality that takes the European imperial center as the norm, with the colonial periphery (with a particular omission of the francophone spaces of *les départements* and *les territoires d'outre-mer*) rarely getting a look in.<sup>56</sup> As Elden notes, "Foucault says little, for instance, about the numerous governmental practices of colonial empires but there are some interesting remarks on the discovery of America [...] and on the constitution of colonial empires."<sup>57</sup> In his 1967 lecture "Des Espaces Autres" ("Of Other Spaces"), Foucault asks the question: "I wonder if certain colonies have not functioned somewhat in this manner. In certain cases, they have played, on the level of the general organization of terrestrial space, the role of heterotopias."<sup>58</sup> The question of the role and function of such heterotopias *vis-à-vis* the colonies is one which the begs the question of whether they can be seen as "counter-sites" or "spaces of illusion," in which real sites "are simultaneously represented, contested and inverted."<sup>59</sup> Where then are the sustained critical discussions of, rather than passing references to, Madagascar, Algeria, and Indochina in the Foucauldian analysis? Would the colonial inflection radically change the ways in which governmentality is exported and developed overseas? Gyan Prakash has argued that "[c]olonial governmentality could not be the tropicalization of its Western form, but rather was its fundamental dislocation," and that colonial governmentality in colonial India is radically discontinuous with the Western "norm."<sup>60</sup> Does governmentality of the colonial core "travel" unevenly to the peripheries? If so, we need to rethink governmentality then by (re) contextualizing it, and by extension we also need to rethink it in terms of the specificities of colonial history in addition to concerns of contemporary neo-colonial world systems.

In Foucault's analysis, the "final elimination of the model of the family and the recentring of the notion of economy" is rendered through the perspective of population.<sup>61</sup> The "problem of population" through rates of births, deaths and diseases is shown to have its own rationale, a rationale that cannot be reduced to the dimension of the family. The family now therefore declines as a model of state and "population" is now regarded as "a fundamental instrument to its government", and this can also be seen in Petty's writings.<sup>62</sup> Population would now be the category of social organization, the object of analysis, and as such, the "ultimate end of government."<sup>63</sup> Petty's later work very much focused on this control and movement of domestic and colonial populations as the "ultimate end of government." As Simon Shapin and Steven Schaffer argue, "questions of epistemology are also questions of social order."<sup>64</sup> This is of absolute importance when considering the exportation of metropolitan epistemes to the colonies from the early modern period onwards as evidenced in the "new geography" and cartographic discourse of William Petty. In transforming both domestic and colonial subjects into mobile, mercantile commodities that bore a new relationship to land, labor and politics, Petty was providing the grist of "number, weight and measure" for the statistical mill of political arithmetic that had been codified with a "knife and clout" in his *Political Anatomy of Ireland*.

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## NOTES

- 1 Cormac Ó Gráda, *Ireland: A New Economic History, 1780-1939* (Oxford UK: Clarendon Press, 1994), 24.
- 2 Hugh Goodacre, "The William Petty Problem and the Whig History of Economics," *Cambridge Journal of Economics* (in press).
- 3 Nessa Cronin, "Review of Ted McCormick, 'William Petty and the Ambitions of Political Arithmetic,'" *Journal of Historical Geography* 38 (2012): 344-45, 344. See also Mary Poovey, "The Political Anatomy of the Economy: English Science and Irish Land," *A History of the Modern Fact: Problems of Knowledge in the Sciences of Wealth and Society* (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 92-143. I am grateful to Kevin Whelan for this reference. Ted McCormick, *William Petty and the Ambitions of Political Arithmetic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
- 4 Cronin, *The Eye of History: Spatiality and Colonial Cartography in Ireland* (unpublished PhD Thesis, NUI Galway, 2007). See especially Chapter Two, "Desocialising Native Space: Plots, 'Plats' and Policy in Early Modern Ireland," 52-115.
- 5 On the re-alignment of the "origins" of political economy, see Goodacre, "Review article: From Petty to Ricardo up to Sraffa," *Economic Issues* 13 (2008): 106-8.
- 6 Patricia Coughlan, "'Cheap and Common Animals': The English Anatomy of Ireland in the Seventeenth Century" in Thomas Healy and Jonathan Sawday, eds., *Literature and the English Civil War* (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 205-23, 206.
- 7 McCormick, *William Petty*, 4.
- 8 Goodacre, "Economics, Geography and Colonialism in the Writings of William Petty," in Richard Arena, Sheila Dow, and Mattias Klaes, eds., *Open Economics: Economics in Relation to Other Disciplines* (London UK: Routledge, 2009), 233-46, 244.
- 9 My biographical information on Petty is from Emil Strauss, *Sir William Petty: Portrait of a Genius* (Glencoe IL: The Free Press, 1954). Petty named his catamaran aptly enough, "The Experiment" and gave equal emphasis to the originality of his double-bottomed boat called "The Invention."
- 10 Wilson Lloyd Bevan, *Sir William Petty: A Study in English Economic Literature* (Baltimore MD: Guggenheimer, Weil & Co., 1894), 7; [www.socserv2.socsci.mcmaster.ca/~econ/ugcm/3113/petty/bevan.html](http://www.socserv2.socsci.mcmaster.ca/~econ/ugcm/3113/petty/bevan.html).
- 11 I owe this note on Samuel Hartlib to, S.J. Connolly ed., *The Oxford Companion to Irish History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004 [1998]), 464.
- 12 The full reference reads as follows: "[...] to show proud man that his most mysterious and complicated enginry is nothing to the compounded and decompounded mysteries in the fabric of man. That all their ... mechanics whatsoever, are no more compared to the fabric of an animal than putting two sticks across is to a loom, a clock, or a ship under sail." Petty as cited in, Strauss, *Sir William Petty*, 34.
- 13 McCormick, *William Petty*, 260.
- 14 Strauss, *Sir William Petty*, 70.
- 15 "Instructions to be observed by Mr. Thomas Jackson, appointed Surveyor for the Barronies of Clanwilliam, [...] in his Surveying and Admeasuring the said Baronies, and in making his Returne of the same," 12 June 1654, as cited in, William Petty, *A History of the Survey of Ireland Commonly Called The Down Survey*, ed. Thomas Aiskew Larcom (New York: Augustus M. Kelley Publishers, 1967 [1851]), 388.

- 16 Thomas Larcom correctly argues that the Strafford Survey could also have held this nomination, but the name is maintained for Petty's survey of 1654-9: "Editor's Preface," in *A History of the Survey of Ireland*, viii.
- 17 W. H., "On Manuscript Mapped and other Townland Surveys in Ireland of a Public Character, embracing the Gross, Civil, and Down Surveys," *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy* 24, Antiquities (1873): 3-115, 21.
- 18 Y.M., Goblet, ed., *A Topographical Index of the Parishes and Townlands of Ireland in Sir William Petty's MSS Barony Maps (c. 1655-9) (Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris, Fonds Anglais, Nos 1 & 2) and Hiberniae Delineatio (c. 1672) (Dublin: Comisiún Láimhscribhinní na hÉireann, 1932)*, vi. See also, John H. Andrews, *Plantation Acres: An Historical Study of the Irish Land Surveyor* (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 1985).
- 19 Jacinta Prunty makes this point in, *Maps and Map-making in Local History* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004), 51.
- 20 William J. Smyth, *Map-Making, Landscapes and Memory: A Geography of Colonial and Early Modern Ireland c. 1530-1750* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2006), 153.
- 21 Petty, "A Treatise of Taxes and Contributions" in, *The Economic Writings of Sir William Petty, together with the Observations Upon the Bills of Mortality, more probably by Captain John Graunt, 2 Volumes*, ed. Charles Henry Hull (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press 1899), 5-6, my emphasis added in last line only.
- 22 Petty, "The Method of Enquiring into the State of any Country," in ed. Marquis of Lansdowne [H.W.E. Petty-Fitzmaurice], ed., *The Petty Papers: Some Unpublished Writings of Sir William Petty from the Bowood Papers, 2 Volumes*, Vol. I (London UK: Constable, 1927), 175. On the life and work of William Cecil, see Christopher Maginn, *William Cecil, Ireland, and the Tudor State* (Oxford UK: Oxford University Press, 2012).
- 23 Petty, *The Political Anatomy of Ireland, with the Establishment for that Kingdom and Verbum Sapienti* (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1970 [1691]), 17, 18. Petty makes reference here to the transportation of the Irish to Spain and "Barbadoes," and he also writes that, "[t]he Irish transported into Foreign parts, between 1651 and 1654, were 34,000 Men," *Political Anatomy*, 20, 7.
- 24 This point has already been made in Cronin, "Review of William Petty," 344-45.
- 25 The blank spaces as purporting to represent "empty" space, in order to encourage habitation and cultivation, and profit.
- 26 The full quotation is, "[l]astly, this great Person [Ormond] takes the great Settlement in hand, when *Ireland* is as a white paper, and capable of his Counsel, under a King curious as well as careful of Reformation; and when there is opportunity, to pass into Positive Laws whatsoever is right reason and the Law of Nature", Petty, "A Treatise of Taxes and Contributions," 9.
- 27 Goodacre, "Economics, Geography and Colonialism," 245.
- 28 T. C. Barnard, *Cromwellian Ireland: English Government and Reform in Ireland 1649-1660* (Oxford UK: Oxford University Press, 1975), 14-5.
- 29 The need to re-establish the links and connections between maps, texts and manuscripts is noted by John H. Andrews when he urges the researcher to reunite what the librarian has divided. John H. Andrews, "Maps, Prints and Drawings," in William Nolan and Angret Simms, eds., *Irish Towns, A Guide to Sources*, (Dublin: Geography Publications, 1998), 27-40. See also Keith Lilley and Catherine Porter, "Mapping worlds? Excavating Cartographic Encounters in Plantation Ireland through GIS," *Historical Geography* 41 (2013) 35-58. I am grateful to Professor Gerry Kearns for the latter reference.

- 30 Smyth, *Map-making, Landscapes and Memory*, 182.
- 31 Smyth, *Map-making, Landscapes and Memory*, 182.
- 32 Smyth, *Map-making, Landscapes and Memory*, 182-3. Smyth also makes the important point that landowners were transplanted often within their own county and/or province, *Map-making, Landscapes and Memory*, 184.
- 33 Smyth, *Map-making, Landscapes and Memory*, 195, 197.
- 34 The *Hibernia delineatio* was an atlas of the Irish counties, based on Petty's work on the Down Survey and influenced by the format, success and use of Christopher Saxton's celebrated county maps of England and Wales, and a map of England and Wales as a whole (1579). The margins of Saxton's maps in Lord Burghley's "atlas" in the British Library contain notes in Burghley's hand, as Burghley clearly saw the value of cartographic knowledge and was an avid map user, patron and collector.
- 35 Petty, "Political Arithmetick," in *Several Essays in Political Arithmetick with Memoirs of the Author's Life* (London: Routledge/Thoemmes Press, 1992), 98. See also the copy of Sir William Petty's "Essay in Political Arithmetick concerning Ireland," National Library of Ireland, Larcom Papers, MS 7795.
- 36 Postcolonial scholars of Irish history have often cited nineteenth-century Ireland as the period in which Ireland as a colonial laboratory is best exemplified; however, a precursor for this can be seen in this instance here. See also, Frances Harris, "Ireland as a Laboratory: The Archive of Sir William Petty," in Michael Hunter, ed., *Archives of the Scientific Revolution: The Formation and Exchange of Ideas in Seventeenth-Century Europe*, (Woodbridge UK: The Boydell Press, 1998), 73-90.
- 37 Petty, *Political Anatomy*, Author's Preface, n.p. Italics are original.
- 38 The narrative of colonial land as "empty," a void *terra nullius* awaiting inscription while also being a virgin *terra incognita* awaiting expansion, allowed for a re-inscription of that land, naming it into existence. This is evident in the various colonial histories and toponymies associated with Ireland, North America and Australia in the British context, and the gendering of such discourse has been noted by feminist scholars.
- 39 Petty, *Political Anatomy*, Author's Preface, n.p.
- 40 Original italics have been removed from quoted text. The advances in the different systems of knowledge led to the training of people within such systems which gave rise, as Mary Poovey argues, to a new social position that of the expert. Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact*, 15.
- 41 Petty, *Political Anatomy*, Author's Preface, n.p.
- 42 Petty, *Political Anatomy*, Author's Preface, n.p.
- 43 Petty, *Political Anatomy*, 1.
- 44 Petty, *Political Anatomy*, 21.
- 45 Petty, *Political Anatomy*, 26.
- 46 Petty, *Political Anatomy*, 26.
- 47 Petty, *Political Anatomy*, 29. Italics in original.
- 48 Petty, *Political Anatomy*, 30.
- 49 Petty, *Political Anatomy*, 31.
- 50 Petty, *Political Anatomy*, 78-9.
- 51 Petty, *Political Anatomy*, 33.
- 52 Petty, *Political Anatomy*, 65.
- 53 Foucault states that political economy arises "out of the perception of new networks of continuous and multiple relations between population, territory, and wealth [...]. In other words, the transition which takes place in the eighteenth century from an art of government



- to a political science, from a regime dominated by structures of sovereignty to one ruled by techniques of government, turns on the theme of population and hence also on the birth of political economy." Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," in Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Hemel Hempstead UK: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), 87-104, 101. On Foucault and the Irish context see also John Morrissey, "Foucault and the Colonial Subject: Emergent Forms of Colonial Governmentality in Early Modern Ireland," in Patrick Duffy and William Nolan, eds., *At the Anvil: Essays in Honour of William J. Smyth* (Dublin: Geography Publications, 2012), 135-150.
- 54 As noted by Stuart Elden, "Governmentality, Calculation, Territory," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 25 (2007): 562-580, 563.
- 55 Bob Jessop, "From Micro-Powers to Governmentality: Foucault's Work on Statehood, State Formation, Statecraft and State Power," *Political Geography* 26 (2006): 34-40, 38.
- 56 Elden, "Governmentality," 567. See also, the question of French intellectual engagement with decolonisation from the 1950s as noted by Robert Young in *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford UK: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 397.
- 57 Elden, "Governmentality," 576.
- 58 Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," *Diacritics*, 16 (1986) [1967]: 22-7, 27.
- 59 Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 24.
- 60 Gyan Prakash, *Another Reason: Science and the Imagination of Modern India* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 125-6.
- 61 Foucault, "Governmentality," 99.
- 62 Foucault, "Governmentality," 99.
- 63 Foucault, "Governmentality," 100.
- 64 Simon Shapin and Steven Schaffer, *Leviathan and the Air-Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 342.

# **“Not So Much for Their Sake as for Its Own”: The State and the Geography of National Education in Pre-Famine Ireland**

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**ABSTRACT:** The centralization of state power in pre-Famine Ireland enabled the British government to target the Irish social body under the pretext of reform. Institutional reform was part of a wider governmental rationale and resulted in the transformation of institutions such that their focus shifted to acting on the Irish social body more generally, with the intention of civilizing Irish subjects. In Ireland the transformation took on the added imputes of attempting to legitimize the British state as key actor in Irish society. The shift in focus of institutions in Ireland represents what Michel Foucault referred to as governmentality, with the British state aiming to “conduct the conduct” of the Irish population in order to provide security. One key institution was the establishment of a national education system pre-Famine Ireland. The establishment of the Commissioners of National Education in 1831 attempted to introduce a non-denominational education system in Ireland that would unite the children of different creeds in the same classroom. This paper examines this introduction of a national education system in Ireland as a governmental technology and the geography of the early years of the system. The system involved a central-local management system, with the Commissioners controlling regulations and local actors responsible for the operation of schools. The establishment and operation of national schools was therefore dependent on local networks of social relations developing common interests in accessing state capacities for education and therefore interacted with the rationale of the state. The placing of local actors under the regulations of the system, while also being placed under the surveillance of the British administration, resulted in the establishment and engineering of social norms that extended well beyond the walls of the schools. The introduction of national education therefore sought to reshape local social relations in line with the rationale of the state. The emerging geography of the system, with core regions of high and low national school densities, were therefore the result of the spatial variation of social relations and interactions with the state across the country. A case study of east Ulster is examined to provide an example of how the introduction of national education attempted to reshape local social relations and how those relations were also influenced by other social actors in pre-Famine Ireland.

An important element within the emerging research on the colonial contexts in Irish historical geography has been the legacy of colonial technologies, such as plantation, partition, and state institutions. Discussions around the nature of colonial technologies used by the British administration in nineteenth-century Ireland have focused on the “social engineering” of the Irish populations and have been examined in various cases; such as the policy of the British government in dealing with the Great Famine.<sup>1</sup> Many recent studies have depicted the British colonial administration of Ireland as an exemplar of what Michel Foucault called governmentality.<sup>2</sup> Governmentality refers to a range of practices and institutions intending the “conduct of conduct” of the population, shaping behavior according to a particular set of norms for a variety of ends.<sup>3</sup> Foucault states that power, and more specifically social power, is

generated through social relations on a local level, and that in the eighteenth and nineteenth century these social relations were "progressively elaborated, rationalised and centralised in the form of or under the auspices of state institutions."<sup>4</sup> The centralization of state power enabled the British government to target the Irish social body under the pretext of reform. Institutional reform was part of a wider governmental rationale and resulted in the transformation of institutions that previously acted on disciplining and enhancing the lives of individuals, such as jails, police, workhouses, and hospitals, so that their focus shifted to acting on the Irish social body more generally, with the stated intention of civilizing and not just restraining Irish subjects. The Act of Union, introduced at the beginning of the nineteenth century, signified the beginning of the shift of focus towards civilizing the Irish population. The Union occurred between two rebellions indicating the unsettled nature of Irish society. The transformation of institutions within a civilizing mission in Ireland therefore took on the added impetus of attempting to legitimize the British state as key actor in Irish society. The most intense period of institutional reform occurred from 1830–45 and took place against the backdrop of the tithe war, highlighting the importance of a civilizing mission and the need for state intervention in Irish society.

One example of this transformation was the introduction of national education. The establishment of the Commissioners of National Education in 1831 attempted to introduce a non-denominational education system in Ireland, which would unite the children of different creeds in the same classroom. In doing so, children of all backgrounds would come under the disciplinary techniques of schools run by the British administration, which could define the capacities of the child and elaborate the way children should behave in regards to social norms, both inside and outside the classroom.<sup>5</sup> National education was an important state institution as it extended beyond the youth, as the structure of the system required cooperation between various local actors and the central authority in the establishment and operation of schools.

Inquiries in 1812 and 1825 found that Irish education was in a poor state, and concluded that the central issue was distrust between the clergy of different faiths and attitudes against the proselytizing nature of educational provisions.<sup>6</sup> The inquiries recommended the intervention of the government and the creation of a centrally controlled national system of education. The educational inquiries were part of a wider trend of information gathering, with over 175 commissions that reported on Ireland between the Act of Union (1801) and the Famine (1847–52). These inquiries acted as a colonial mechanism that defined the condition of the Irish "social body" and thus determined the basis of colonial intervention in Ireland.<sup>7</sup> The reports presented a comprehensive plan for a system of general education for Ireland, the aim of which was to provide "a system of united education from which suspicion should, if possible, be banished, and the cause of distrust and jealousy be effectively removed."<sup>8</sup> To achieve this it was recommended to establish a central authority that would control the expenditure of public money, define the curriculum, appoint inspectors, and have the power to appoint and dismiss schoolmasters. Despite similar systems proposed in both inquiries, it took another parliamentary committee and a failed bill before the system was finally introduced through the infamous letter from Edward Stanley.<sup>9</sup> Edward Stanley was the Chief Secretary of Ireland from 1831 to 1833 and outlined the system of national education in a letter to the Duke of Leinster in October 1831. It is from this letter, and not from any official legislation, that the national education system was established and it remains the legal basis for national education in Ireland to this day.

The educational developments influenced by the British administration in the eighteenth century were often aimed at proselytizing Catholic children. The reports and debates around the creation of a centralized education system for Ireland therefore chart the transformation of education from a mechanism to convert the Irish population from "the errors of Popery" to one



intended to train the Irish population so that they would act within the norms of society and become “useful citizens.”<sup>10</sup> Educational reform therefore represents the shift from disciplinary power, targeting the body (and mind) of the pupil, to a mode of governmentality targeting the behavior of the Irish social body more generally.<sup>11</sup> National education would mean the Irish population would “receive its benefits as one undivided body, under one and the same system, and in the same establishments,” and in doing so would instill habits and discipline “which are yet more valuable than mere learning.”<sup>12</sup> The shift in focus of the British government was summed up by Thomas Spring-Rice, who stated that it was the “duty of the state to provide the means of instruction for all classes of its subjects, not so much for their sakes as for its own.”<sup>13</sup>

The education policy implemented in Ireland was important in a wider colonial context. The introduction of a centralized system of education as a governmental technology in Ireland was of much interest in the British Empire, especially in the Anglophone colonies. As a result, the national system in Ireland became a model, with colonies in Canada and Australia directly importing the structure of the Irish system in the 1840s.<sup>14</sup> Education reform was also implemented in 1830s India, with policy shifting to the pursuit of Western science and literature through the medium of the English language.<sup>15</sup> The colonial impact of Irish national education was not confined to the structure of the system, as the textbooks published by the Commissioners of National Education became one of the most widely used series of textbooks throughout the Empire. The books did not contain material overtly specific to Ireland and Irish culture as they viewed the world through an overtly British imperial lens. The Irish system therefore represents a wider attempt throughout the Empire to normalize the ideology of imperialism and attempt to legitimize a dominant culture and secure imperialist control.<sup>16</sup> The educational reforms of the British state were therefore not unique to Ireland, and demonstrate an imperial governmentality aimed at the ‘conduct of conduct’ of the colonial populations. National education in Ireland therefore represents the view that Ireland was treated as a ground for social experimentation for the Empire, as it was “a social laboratory, the scene of daring and ambitious experiments... the most conventional of Englishmen were willing to experiment in Ireland on the lines which they were not prepared to contemplate or tolerate at home.”<sup>17</sup>

This paper examines this introduction of a national education system in Ireland, the effects that it had on social relations, and how that policy influenced the geography of education in the country. The rationale of the state in introducing a centrally regulated system of education interacted with location-specific relations to form unique social networks. The spatial variation of social relations and interactions with the state therefore provided the basis for the unique geography of national education in pre-Famine Ireland. The examination of national education is part of the emerging discussions of Irish education, which draw upon Michel Foucault’s writings on governmentality, which includes John Morrissey’s research on the emergence of a neoliberal governmentality, which seeks to regulate the subjectivity of academic life in Ireland.<sup>18</sup>

### **The structure of national education**

In a departure from the earlier proposals, the later plans for reform embodied a more liberal view of schooling. A central element of this was the belief that education should be demanded and offered rather than forced. Frankland Lewis, the Chief Commissioner of the 1825 inquiry, exemplified this belief in parliament when he stated that “if education was to be generally given to all, it must be given in a manner in which those to whom it is offered were willing to receive it.”<sup>19</sup> Once again the continuing discussions on education represent the shift to more liberal attitudes towards the use of education, developing of the concept of self-regulation with only those who desired education approaching the state for aid, and therefore interacting with the regulations of the state system for their own interests. The relation between security and liberty is

highlighted through this, where security involves the regulation of groups in order to lead them to exercise their liberty in a disciplined manner and, as such, governmentality only works when individuals act upon themselves as free members of society.<sup>20</sup> In this way, national education attempted to shape individuals so that they would not need to be explicitly governed by others but instead could govern themselves; "if we take educational institutions, we realize that one is managing others and teaching them to manage themselves."<sup>21</sup> Self-regulation in the colonial education policy in Ireland had the added impetus of attempting to shape the Irish population so they would exercise their liberty in a disciplined manner that accepted the legitimacy of the Union, while also reducing religious animosity.

To establish a national school, local individuals had to apply to the Commissioners of National Education and fill out a query sheet with the details of the proposed school. The Commissioners had a three-grade classification system for applications, introduced in Stanley's letter, based on the main principle of uniting those of different creeds. The first class of applications were those that were signed by both Protestant (including Presbyterian) and Roman Catholic clergymen, which in effect needed cooperation of clergy members of different creeds.<sup>22</sup> In most cases, one of these clergymen became the patron of the schools, with the others granted visitation privileges. The patron was heavily involved in the local management of national schools, usually in charge of hiring schoolmasters and providing local funds. While there were many school managers and committees in existence, the Commissioners directly communicated with the patron. It was in this way that the dual-management system emerged, with central regulation of the system and local management of schools headed by the patron. The importance placed on local management opened the system to influence from a variety of actors on many scales. The main example of this was that, in most cases, the patrons and school managers were local clergy who were often heavily influenced by the views of the bishops in the area. The second class of applications were those signed by clergymen of one denomination and laity of the opposite creed, again seen as cooperation between different faiths. In these cases the clergyman who signed the application usually became the patron, but cases existed where agents of landlords or influential lay members of the community were the applicant and patron. Third-class applications were those signed by laity from both denominations with no clergy member. The regulations stated that if applications were exclusively signed by only one denomination the Commissioners would make an inquiry as to the circumstance of the application. The majority of schools were established through second-class applications, with 1,106 national schools established by 1834, out of which 176 were from first-class applications, 601 were from second class and 114 were from third-class applications.

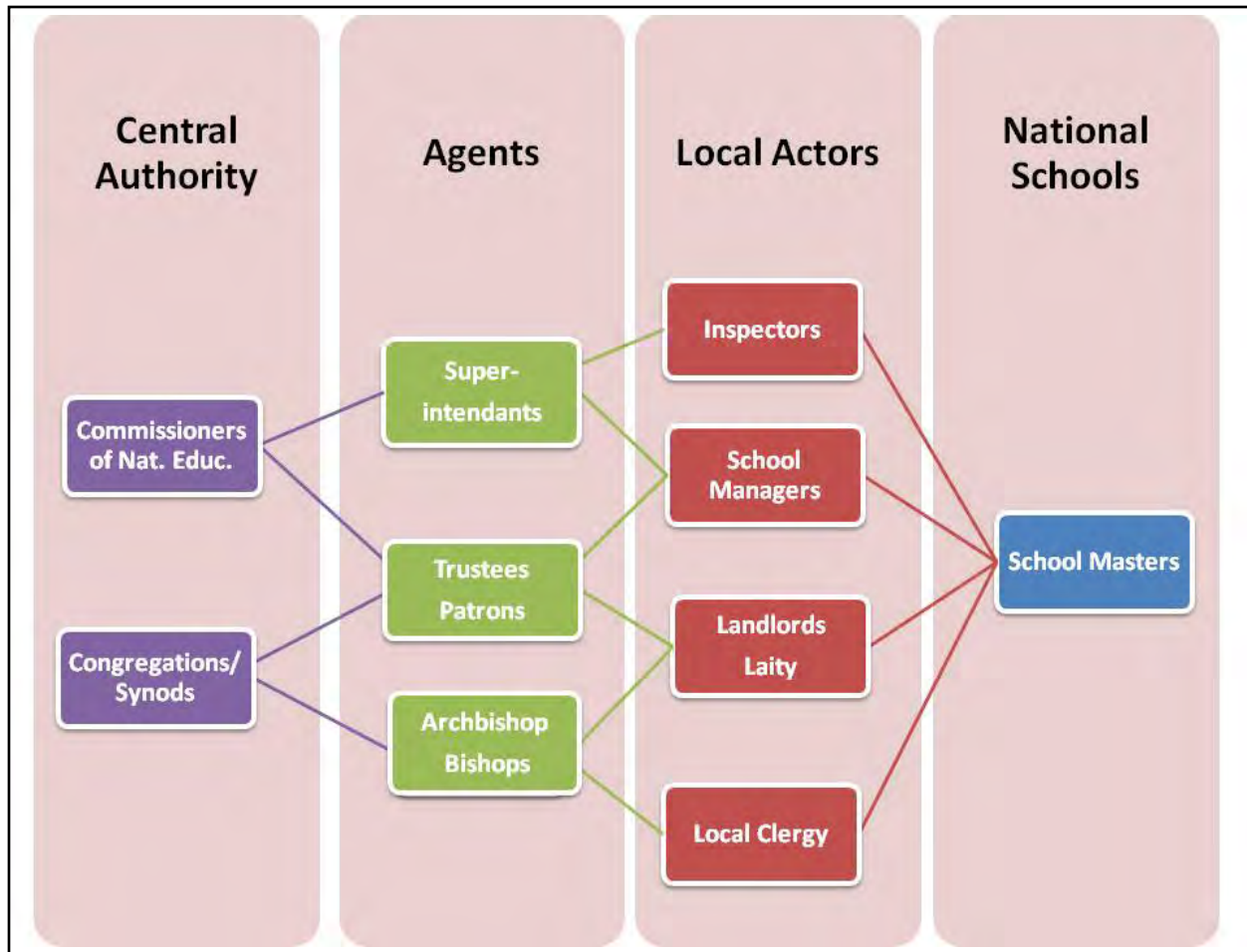
The character of the grading system is a clear indication of the state's attempt to place different local actors in a unified system that promoted unity and thus secure governance. The encouragement of local management was an element of using liberal government to achieve security while respecting the freedom of those to be governed, with the local actors self-regulating and self-governing, thus leaving the state to govern from a distance.<sup>23</sup> The attempt to encourage the clergy to establish or transfer existing schools to the national system was part of the strategy to colonize existing education provisions, with liberal modes of government utilizing the existing capacities of free actors to connect to the system.<sup>24</sup> Once connected to the state system, local actors who did not respond to self-regulation were subjected to corrective action by the Commissioners, such as withholding salaries or discontinuing funds.<sup>25</sup> The inspectorate played a vital role in linking central regulation to local management, focusing on the layout and character of the school building and the competencies of the schoolmaster or -mistress. The attention to school maintenance and teaching standards meant added responsibility was assigned to the patrons, committees, managers, and schoolmasters to uphold standards. The power of national education

as a governmental technology was rooted in the inspectorate as it extended the state's gaze into the schools and thus regulated the behavior of schoolmasters and local management. The local management was thus accountable to the Commissioners and, therefore, those who exercised power within the schools were subjected by its functions as much as the children taught within them.<sup>26</sup> The state was thus using the national education system as a technology that extended beyond shaping the behavior of the youth, and it cultivated lateral techniques that allowed for the supervision of parents, local actors in schools and, ultimately, society as a whole. In this way, national schools in pre-Famine Ireland represented minute "social observatories."<sup>27</sup>

As the system was based on the liberal rationale of government, local actors interacted with the state through pursuing their own interests in gaining access to state capacities. Relationships were therefore established between the nature and character of educational problems facing various social groups at a local level in pre-Famine Ireland, which became linked into a common interest in accessing resources for the establishment of schools. The development of a common interest at a local level and the complex interactions of strategies at various scales may have transformed what was essentially a local issue of the establishment of schools and tied them into much larger political ones. If so, associations would be established between a variety of local actors, all of whom were seeking to enhance their powers by gaining access to state capacities and resources so that they could function to their own advantage.<sup>28</sup> The liberal rationale of government meant that national education, as an emerging technology of government, did not have overall control and domination by a central authority but sought to manage the domain outside politics without destroying the autonomy of the actors in that domain. As such, the structure of national education in Ireland meant the system was dependent on the strength of the various local relations and their ability to cooperate. To achieve this without destroying the autonomy of local actors, the state granted them roles in the governance of the system at all levels.<sup>29</sup>

The national education system in Ireland was therefore based on a complex network of social relations. Figure 1 is used as an illustrative tool to view the network of relations that resulted from the interactions with actors at different scales. The central-local management structure meant that the system was open to influence from a variety of scales. At the highest level were the institutions that acted on a national scale. The Commissioners of National Education regulated the whole system and controlled the nature of applications, and therefore influenced those at all levels. Religious institutions were also influential as the central administrative bodies of the various Churches had influence on a national scale, either through interacting with the Commissioners or by influencing their clergy at various lower scales. These national authorities had regional agents that implemented the strategies of the central authority, such as superintendents who managed regional model schools and Archbishops who regulated the local clergy. In the network of national education, regional agents interacted closely with the patrons of national schools, who in some cases were patrons to several national schools over an area, and thus the various agents acted as the intermediaries between the central and local management of national education. At a local level, there was a series of different actors who influenced the establishment and operation of national schools, such as managers who regulated individual schools, inspectors who ensured schools were properly regulated and landlords, local clergy, and laity who established and operated national school. At the bottom-most scale were the schoolmasters who influenced the children attending national schools. The network of social relations illustrates that power was distributed as a net of systems of relations spread throughout society, and that control was conducted by governmental programs in the sense that it held the network of actors together.<sup>30</sup>

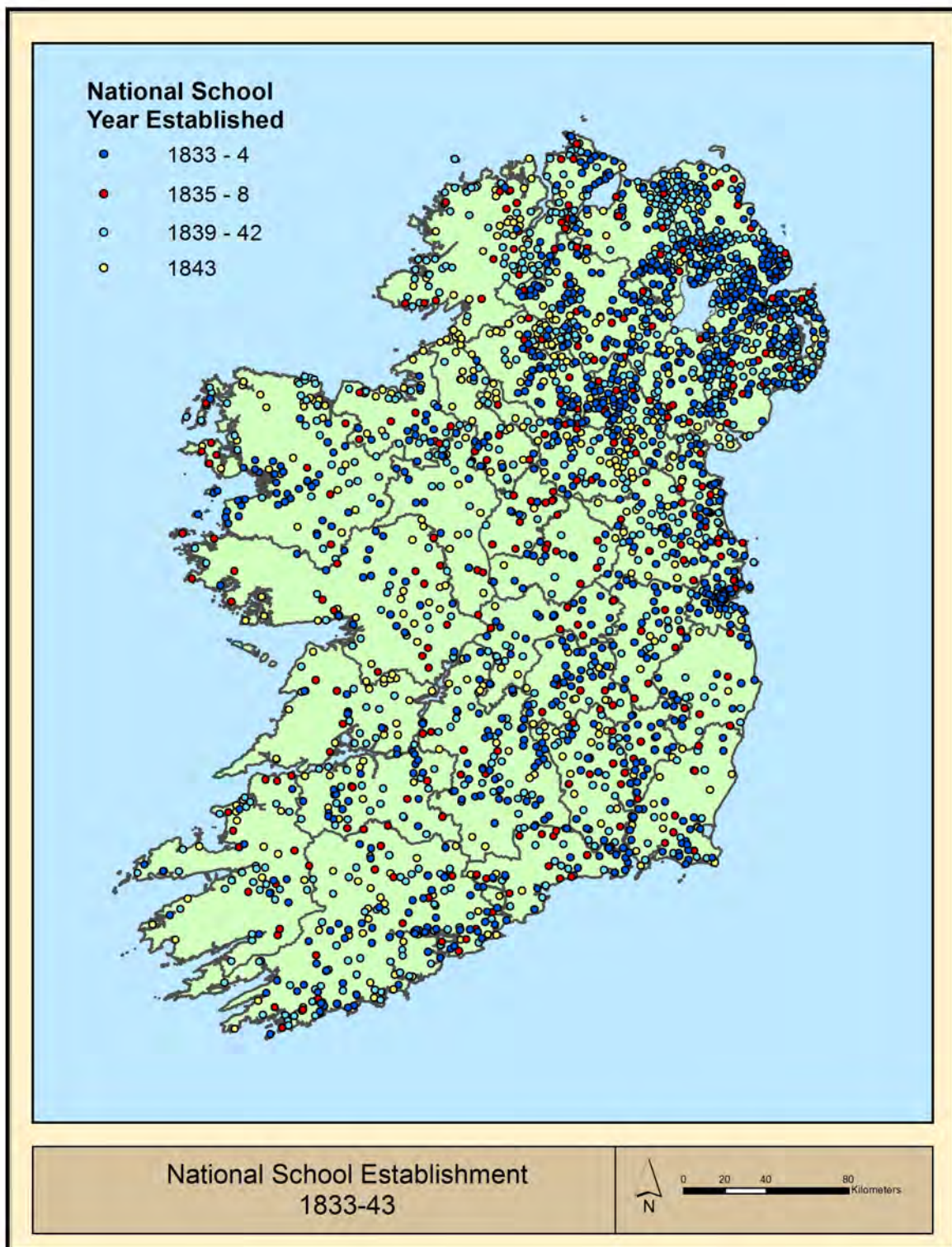




**Figure 1.** Network of Influence of National Education.

### The geography of national education

National schools became an important element in the Irish landscape and appeared in a wide variety of locations, often sited near the outskirts of villages, mirroring the location of other state-run institutions and Catholic institutions as part of the “governmental and ecclesiastical fringe-belt” that emerged in nineteenth-century Ireland.<sup>31</sup> National schools were a unique state institution, however, as it was also common to find them in peripheral locations, including Roman Catholic chapel grounds or in isolated rural areas. As an element of the institutional emergence of the state in the Irish landscape, national education “symbolises the transformation of the state from an abstract set of power relationships into a physical entity” which would eventually be witnessed in every parish in Ireland.<sup>32</sup> The Commissioners of National Education began receiving applications for the establishment of national schools in 1832 and by the onset of the Famine there were 3,426 national schools in operation, affording education to 432,844 children.<sup>33</sup> Figure 2 shows the location of national schools established in this time period and illustrates that national education did not emerge uniformly. A brief observation of the location of national schools indicates that there were larger numbers of national schools established in the northeast and east of the country, with western areas having fewer national schools. While it is possible to make overall comments about trends of national-school establishment from this distribution map, when this information is aggregated into barony units, patterns of national-school establishment become easier to identify. The examination of national-school distribution at a barony level



**Figure 2.** National school locations, 1833–43.

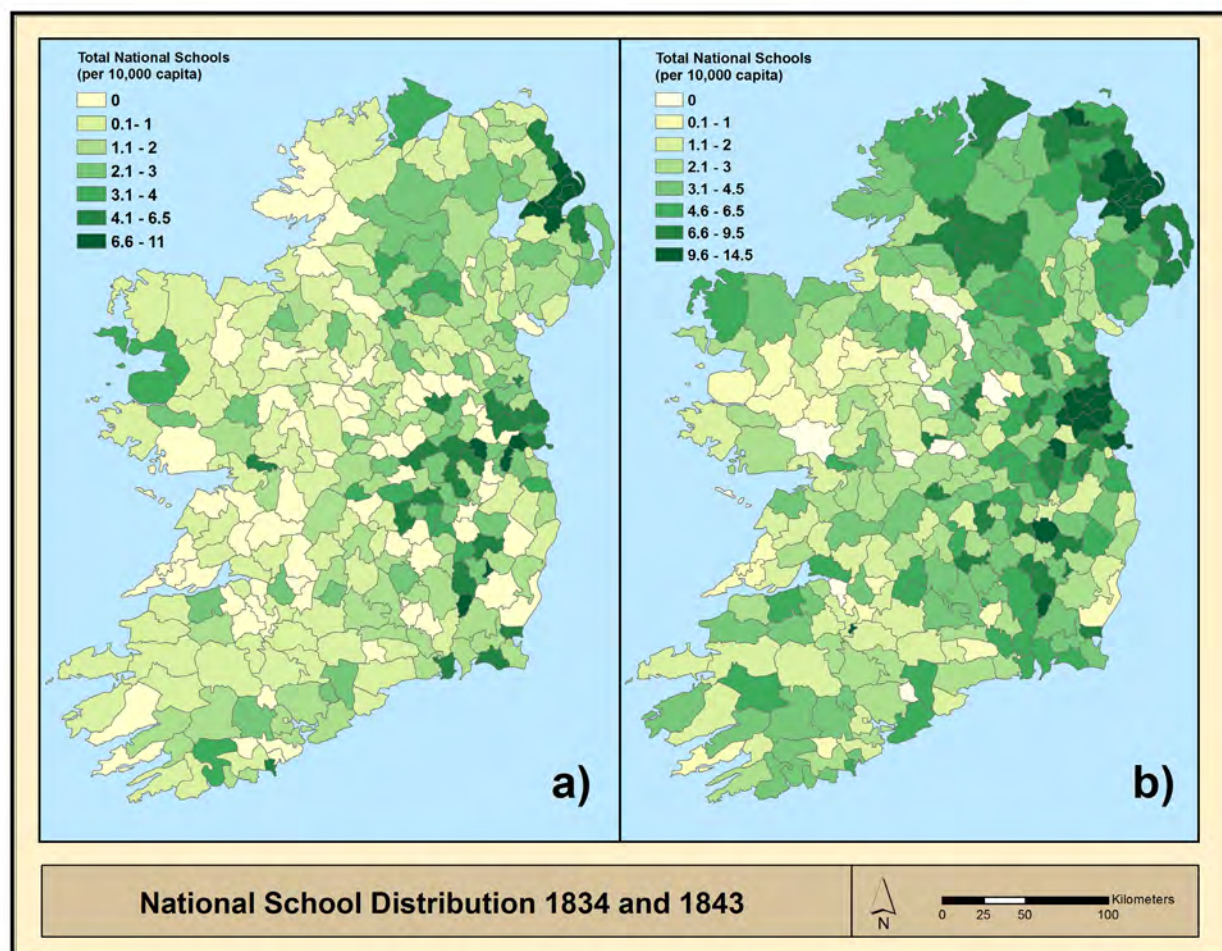
provides an indication of the regions that were quick to adopt national education in pre-Famine Ireland, and also regions that experienced relative non-adoption. While baronies are a more suitable unit to study the distribution, there is a problem of relative size. National-school density per ten thousand people is used to provide a more instructive unit of measure for true national-school distributions.

The years after the creation of the national school system saw rapid expansion, with 1,106 schools established by the end of 1834. The map of national-school densities in 1834 demonstrates that areas of high and low density emerged with the creation of the system; see Figure 3a. A region in the east of Ulster emerged with high densities. High school establishment was localized to a relatively small area. Baronies with high densities stretched from the east coast area of Down and Antrim, north to Glenarm in the Glens of Antrim. The baronies in this region all contained more than 2 national schools per ten thousand people, with the baronies around Belfast and Carrickfergus containing between 6.5 and 9.5 national schools per ten thousand people. The urban area of Belfast City had a relatively small number of schools, amounting to only 0.5 national schools per ten thousand people, suggesting that different processes occurred in urban centers with regard to national-school establishment. The area of central Ulster, specifically around north Monaghan and south Tyrone, emerged with relatively high national-school densities. The region had above the national average densities of 1.6 national schools per ten thousand people, as most of the baronies had more than 2 national schools per ten thousand people. The rest of the northern areas of the country had close to the average densities, except for the low densities contained in Armagh and the west coast area of Donegal. Inishowen was an outlier in the region of low densities with a density of 3.6 national schools per ten thousand people in 1834.

Another region of high national-school densities emerged in the north Dublin and southern Meath area. The majority of baronies from the north of Dublin City stretching to the southern area of Meath had high densities of above 4.5 national schools per ten thousand people. Similar to Belfast City, there was a low density of national schools within Dublin City, equating to less than one national school per ten thousand people. A region of central Leinster stretching from west Kildare through east Laois and into Carlow emerged as an area of relatively high densities, as the majority of baronies contained densities above the national average. There was a zone of relative low densities on the east coast of Leinster, with the baronies in the south of Wicklow and north Wexford having densities lower than one national school per ten thousand people, and with three baronies having no national school.

A zone of mixed densities emerged in the south of the country, with an area that arched from south Wexford, across south Tipperary, and into south Cork that had close to average densities. Some baronies adjacent to urban centers had slightly higher densities, such as those close to Waterford City and Wexford Town. The region coincided with the old established Catholic big farm heartland as identified by Whelan, who stated that there was a survival of significant Catholic landlords in a district from Waterford Harbour through to Limerick.<sup>34</sup> This Catholic core had a number of common features such as a monolithic Catholic population, a commercialized Catholic farmer class, capacity to generate wealth, an outward-looking orientation with connections to Catholic Europe and a leadership class based on surviving Catholic landed families. Educationally, this manifested itself with the diffusion of exclusively Catholic-sponsored schools and the educational institutions of Catholic Orders across the region, such as the Christian Brothers schools that originated in Waterford in 1802 and the Presentation Sisters who originated in Cork in 1775. The Christian Brothers responded to a request from Archbishop Murray, a member of the Commissioners of National Education, to give the national system a fair trial in some of their schools; however they began withdrawing their schools from the system from 1836, only a few years after the national system began.<sup>35</sup>





**Figure 3.** National-school distribution, 1834 and 1843.

A large region of low national-school densities stretched throughout the western area of the country and included much of the midlands. The region arched from the south of Donegal through Longford and Westmeath to Clare. Nearly all the baronies in this region had fewer than two national schools per ten thousand people, with a large proportion below one school per ten thousand people. There were a large number of baronies, over twenty, which had no national schools. Once again the urban areas, such as Limerick City and Galway had low densities of 0.5 national schools per ten thousand people or fewer. There was an outlier in the western region of low density as the area surrounding Clew Bay had high densities of around 3.5 national schools per ten thousand people in 1834. Overall, in the initial years after the creation of national education in Ireland it can be said that the pattern of national-school establishment was highly regional with core regions of high and low density, regions of mixed density, and several significant outliers.

Over the period from the creation of the system to the period just before the Famine, there were some significant changes to the regional nature of the system; see Figure 3b. The region of east Ulster had expanded to encompass much of Antrim and Derry. The increases around the area of west Antrim, up to the Bann Valley, meant that the region now stretched from the area from southeast Down to Coleraine, with all baronies having densities over five national schools per ten

thousand people. The vast increase was mainly due to the official adoption of the national system by the Synod of Ulster. The Synod was the largest congregation of Presbyterians in the country who met annually to discuss and debate various issues that affected members of the Church in the region. A special meeting of the Synod was called to discuss the merits of the national system soon after the regulations were published in 1831. The Synod opposed the national system for several reasons. While officially it was stated that it opposed increased interference of the state and the exclusion of the Bible as a common school book, it soon became apparent that the true reasons for opposition was due to the increased influence of Catholic priests in their schools.<sup>36</sup> The Synod entered into negotiations with the Commissioners of National Education, and in 1838 the regulations were altered in line with the Synod's opposition. The result of this was that in 1839-42 there was a large increase in the numbers of Presbyterians establishing schools in the region, accounting for a quarter of application in 1839 alone. The central-Ulster region was still apparent in 1842 but, due to a lack of major increase, possessed by then significantly lower densities than the east-Ulster region. Other increases in the peripheries of these two regions meant that a transitional zone emerged which connected the two relatively high-density regions in Ulster with a zone close to the average density. Inishowen was again an outlier which, in 1842, had the highest number of national schools in the country with forty-five. Armagh was the only area that contained a significant number of baronies below the average.

The changes in the pattern and regions of national-school establishment in the east of the country were similar to what occurred in the north. The core region around north Dublin was again evident in 1842, and had extended northwards to include the area north of Drogheda. The region of central Leinster, while still present, had lessened in densities when compared to the north Dublin region. This region, which stretched from west Kildare into the Barrow Valley, had densities slightly above the average. Slight increases in the periphery of this region, especially in east Kildare, led to the connection of the two Leinster regions, meaning that a zone of relatively high densities existed from the area surrounding Drogheda to the south of Carlow. The southern zone of the country had a consistent pattern of national-school establishment over the period. The area stretching from south Wexford to the west of Munster had densities from around one to three national schools per 10,000 residents, with the areas around Waterford having higher densities, meaning there was not a significant change to the initial region.

The western region of the country still has the lowest densities in the country, with an area stretching from south Donegal to western Tipperary and Limerick that possessed lower-than-average densities. The outlier of high density surrounding Clew Bay had transformed to an area of low national-school density by this time. The vast reduction in the number of schools in the area was the result of the opposition of Archbishop John McHale. While initially a reluctant supporter of the system, McHale changed his attitude publically in 1838 and began protesting against the system for what he saw as an unfair distribution of funds. In reality, McHale was reacting to the increasing influence that the Commissioners exercised over local clergy involved in the system.<sup>37</sup> McHale influenced local clergy who had become patrons to national schools to withdraw from the national system.<sup>38</sup> As a result of the public campaign against the system, the Catholic clergy in the Galway and Mayo areas started to withdraw their schools from the national system. In the three years after Archbishop McHale denounced the system, a total of fifty-six schools were withdrawn from the national system in Ireland, with fifty-three (95 percent) of these located in the diocese of Tuam. The twenty-four schools that had been connected to the national system in the Clew Bay area were all withdrawn by 1840.

The change in the distribution of national schools in the period prior to the Famine resulted in the modification of the various regions that emerged after the creation of the system. The initial high adoption rates in the north and east of the country and low densities in the west were further

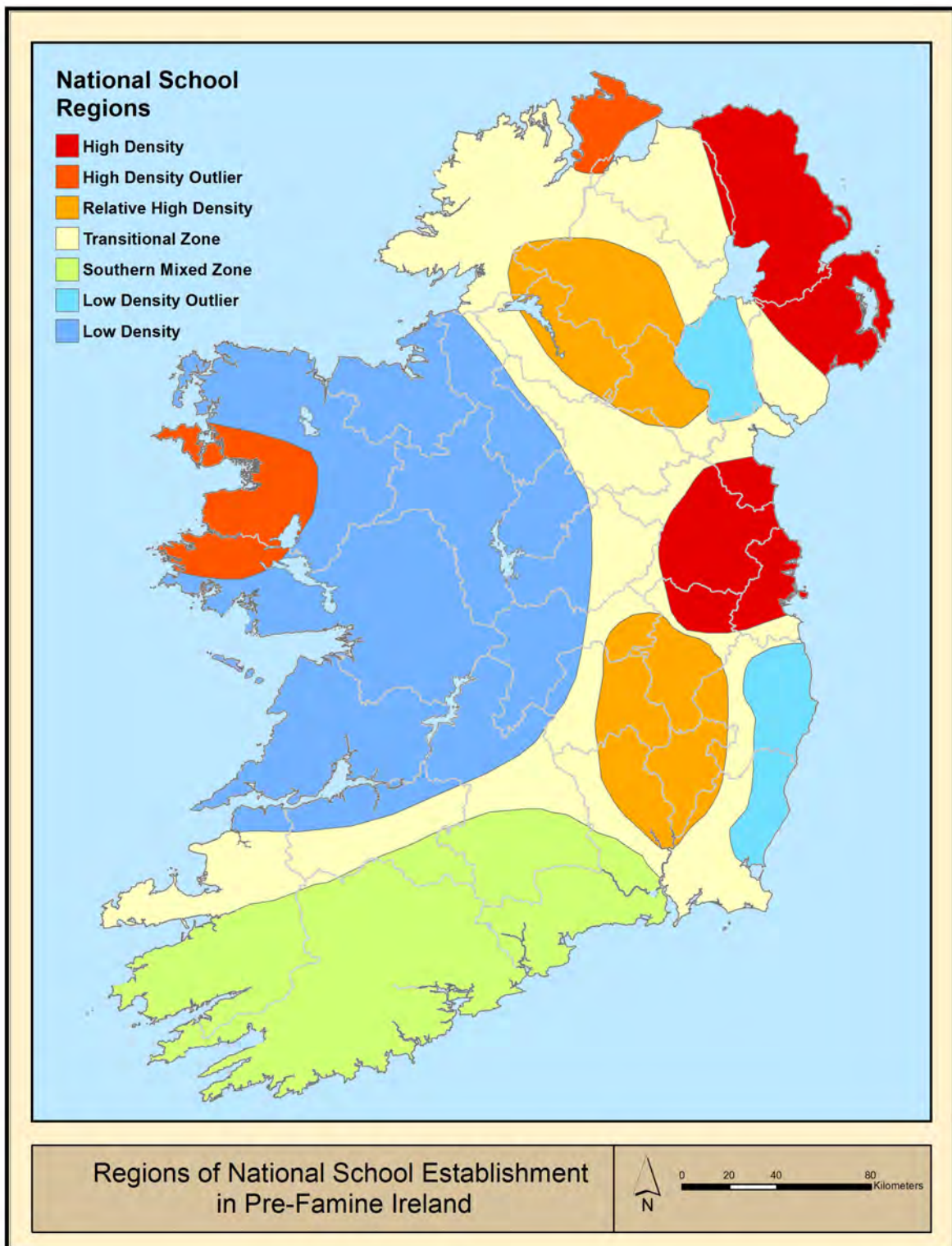
consolidated with an extension to the initial core areas of high and low density. The distribution therefore displayed an east/west pattern that can be highly generalized by a line running from an area around Sheephaven Bay in Donegal to Waterford Harbour. The regions to the east of this line can be characterized as areas with a high rate of adoption of the system, while those to the west of the line were areas of relative non-adoption. A similar generalized line was identified by Smyth in a study of the variations in vulnerability to the Famine.<sup>39</sup> Within this generalized pattern, the geography of national education in pre-Famine Ireland was highly regional. Overall it can be said that there were two core regions of the country that were particularly quick to adopt the national system, with two zones of relative high adoption close to each. The whole western area of the country showed relative non-adoption of the system, except for a small number of isolated cases. It was seen that between and connecting the regions of high and low densities were transitional zones that showed a degree of mixed densities. Figure 4 presents the regional character of national education. Influenced by Whelan's methods in producing his map of regional archetypes in Ireland, it delineates various regions that were not necessarily continuous. The borders of the various regions are used for illustrative purposes, as they did not possess definitive boundaries, and as a result, should be considered as "reified abstractions."<sup>40</sup>

### **Regional example of East Ulster**

The examination of national education policy in Ireland illustrated that the system relied on a complex network of social relations, while observations of the geography of the system highlighted the regional dimension in the emergence of the system. The examination of a regional case illustrates how the structure of the system and the network of social relations influenced the establishment of national education and resulted in regional patterns. The examination of regions in this way follows on from the work of Anne Gilbert, among others, who discuss the nature of regions as a physical setting for social interactions, with social actors attempting to change relationships within society. The focus, therefore, is on the spatial networks where interactions take place, thus leading to a general understanding of the functioning of society and space as a "geography of power." In this sense, networks of social relations are region-specific, with groups having differential access to power through interactions within these networks, leading to regional differences.<sup>41</sup> The examination of how different actors interacted, in particular spaces, to form distinct social networks suggests how localities came to be different, and forms the basis of the asymmetrical distribution of national education.<sup>42</sup> In order to describe the social relations involved in national education it is necessary to research local case studies and for this purpose the case of east Ulster has been chosen.

East Ulster was an area of dramatic social change from the eighteenth century which resulted in the interaction of a large number of social groups. The complex nature of labor and industry, landholding, and religion in Pre-Famine Ulster resulted in a unique social configuration, which was divided into distinct self-aware groups and strata that had their own tactical outlook.<sup>43</sup> The complexity of the social structure in the region increased public interest in education. The different classes of applications are taken as a central source in providing an indication of interactions of social actors in the region. The fact that clergymen of different faiths participated together in the establishment of national schools for first-class applications is taken as a sign of cooperation between the different social actors in the local network. Across the country there was evidence to suggest that when applications were being made to the Commissioners, there was communication between the clergy of different faith, and also with influential lay members of the community. An example from the east-Ulster region comes from an interview with a Catholic priest in Antrim where he stated that he had "the attestation of a respectable neighboring Roman Catholic clergyman, that in three schools which he has succeeded in connecting with the Board



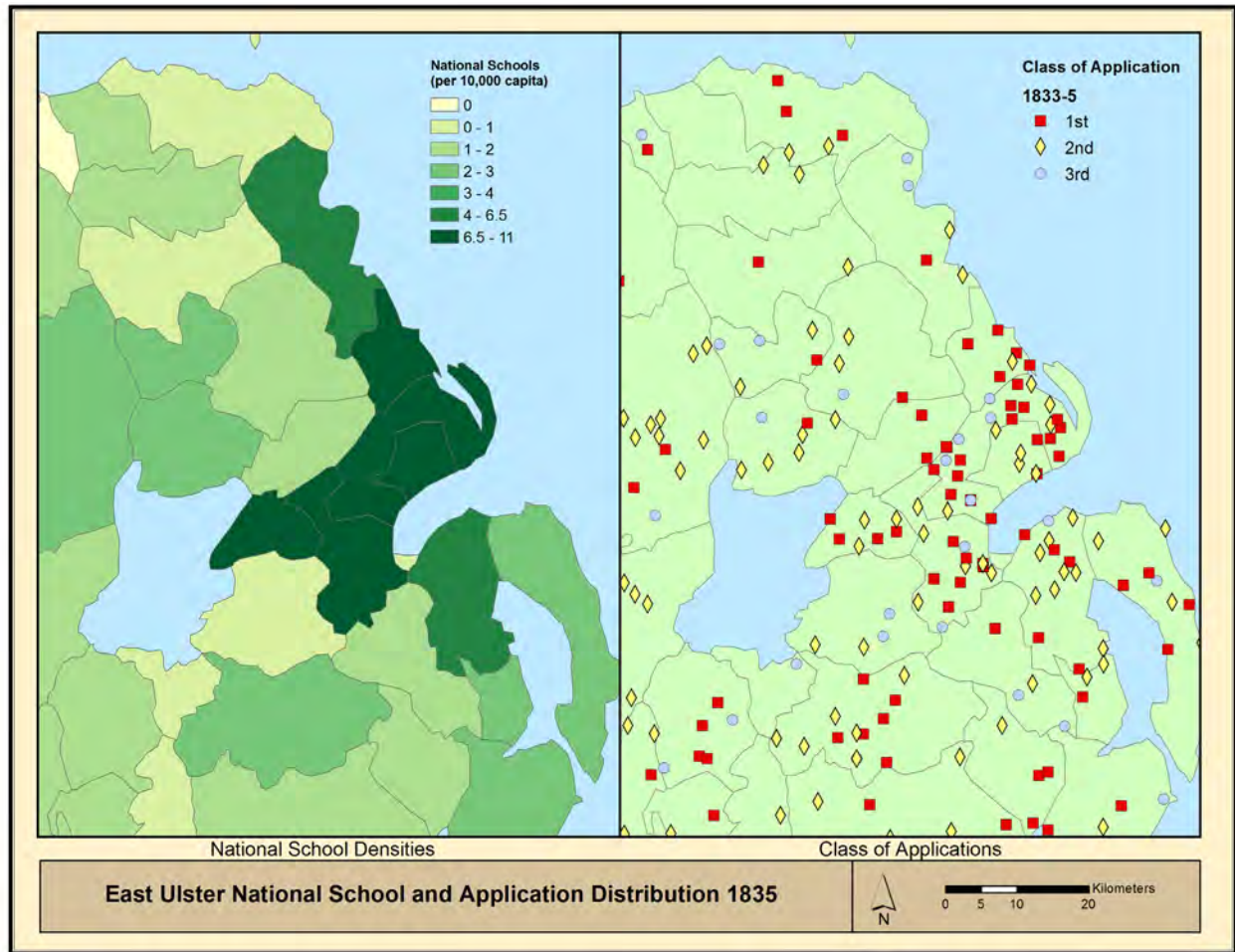


**Figure 4.** Regions of national-school establishment in pre-Famine Ireland.

[of National Education] the Presbyterians have no objection in his neighborhood to send their children to them; and I may affirm of this clergyman that he lives, I believe, in harmony with the Protestant clergymen of the neighborhood."<sup>44</sup> The evidence of communication between the various social actors involved in the establishment of national schools suggests that signatures present on applications represent real cooperative interactions within the local social network.

The distribution of the various classes of applications in east Ulster is presented in Figure 5. There was a concentration of first-class applications that correlated with the high national-school densities in the Lagan Valley, Belfast, Carrickfergus and Larne axis. The combined baronies of Belfast Upper, Belfast Lower, Carrickfergus, Massereene Lower, and Glenarm Upper had a total of forty-three first-class applications out of a total of sixty-eight schools established. The clergy of different faiths were therefore jointly involved in 63 percent of the schools established in the region. Out of the remaining applications, 27 percent were second-class, meaning that clergymen of only one faith were involved in their establishment, and 10 percent were signed by laity alone. A drop in the levels of first-class applications occurred outside of this core region. In the areas of northwest Antrim and east Derry first-class applications dropped to 36 percent and 44 percent were second-class applications. The distribution indicates that the cooperation between the clergy in the east-Ulster region was confined to a specific locality and highlights that the behavior of the clergy varied over space. The distribution can thus be seen as a result of the changing nature of social interactions over space, with the actions of the various clergy as key drivers. The area of high clergy interaction indicates a different local social network that resulted in a higher establishment of national schools. The nature of local social networks and how they interacted with the state was therefore central to the distribution of national schools.

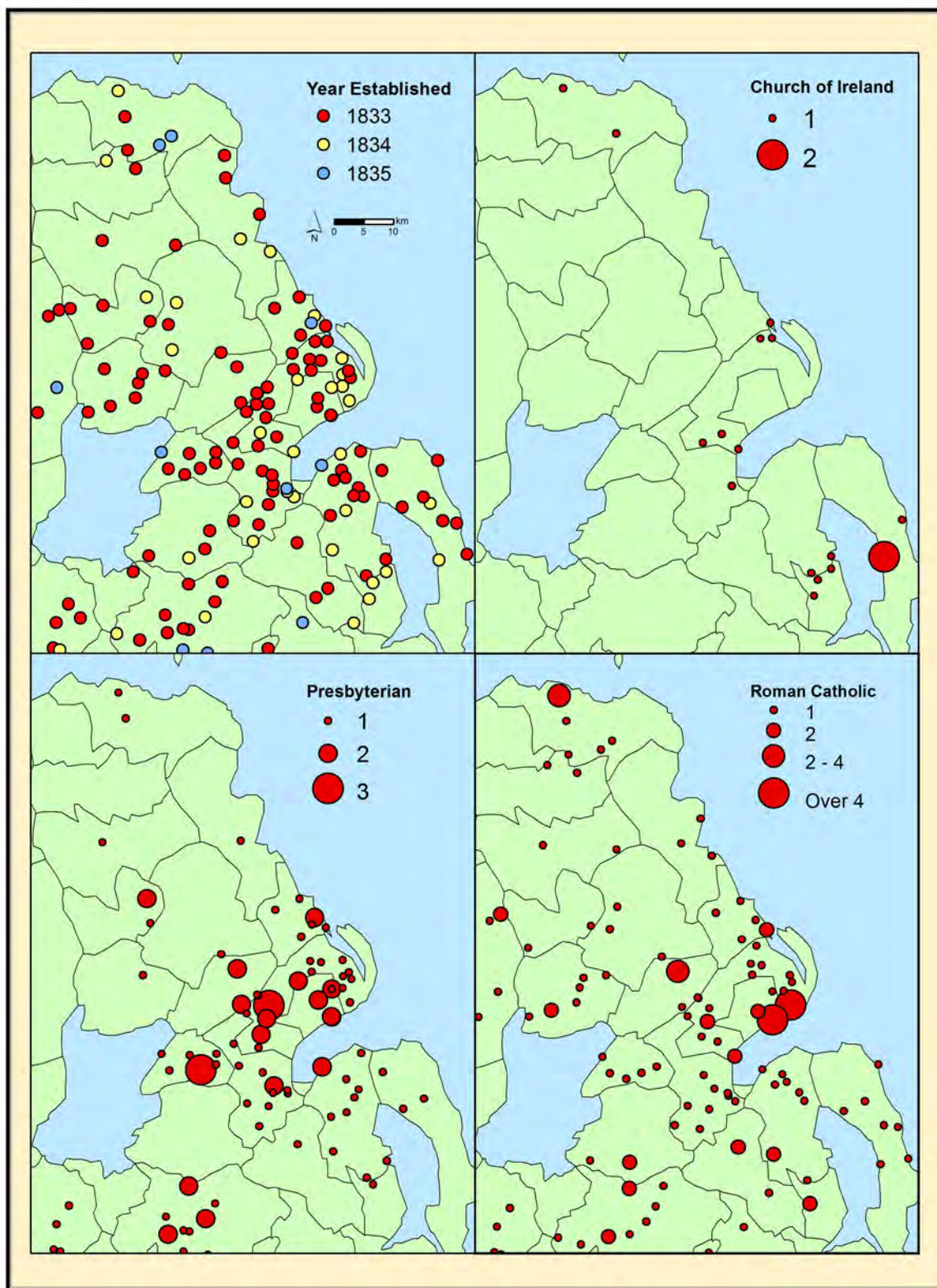
The proportion and distribution of clergy signatures provides a clearer indication of interactions and social relations of the various actors across the region; see Figure 6. The clergy of the Church of Ireland were not very active in the establishment of national schools in the east-Ulster region, with only 7 percent of all national schools established in Antrim and Down having the involvement of the Church of Ireland. The negative reaction of the Church of Ireland hierarchy to the introduction of the system likely influenced the actions of the local clergy and resulted in the lack of involvement in establishing national schools.<sup>45</sup> The Presbyterian clergy were active in the initial establishment of national schools in the region, as 41 percent of the schools were established with the involvement of Presbyterian clergymen. While this high rate might be expected given that the area was home to a high proportion of Presbyterians, it is surprising given the seemingly negative reaction of the Presbyterian Church, namely the Synod of Ulster, to the creation of the national system. The signatures of Presbyterian clergymen in the initial three years of the system were concentrated in the Lagan Valley-Larne crescent of high density. The activity was highest in the baronies of Belfast Lower and Carrickfergus, where 77 percent of all applications were signed by Presbyterian clergymen, with 22 percent of those signed by more than one Presbyterian minister. Outside of this core region, the level of Presbyterian clergy involvement dropped to 23 percent of applications signed. The correlation between Presbyterian clergy involvement and high national-school density indicates that they were important drivers in the adoption of the national school system in the east of Ulster, but the behavior was variable over the region. The importance of the Presbyterian clergy as actors in the wider region was highlighted by the fact that they had a much higher proportion of places of worship in the area. Out of all the places of worship in the Dioceses of Connor; 41 percent were Presbyterian, with 25 percent being Church of Ireland, 20 percent were Catholic, and 14 percent were other Protestant dissenter places of worship.<sup>46</sup>



**Figure 5.** East Ulster national schools and application distribution, 1835.

The Catholic clergy had the largest proportion of the signatures, with 52 percent of all the signatures on applications in the wider region. The strategy of the state, which unofficially assigned preference to the Catholic Church in applications for schools, was a factor in the high proportions. The involvement of the Catholic clergy in national-school establishment was not necessarily concentrated around any one locality within the region, indicating the widespread activity of Catholic priests. The majority of applications signed by the Catholic clergy, however, were signed by a single priest, unlike the distribution of Presbyterian signatures that often had two or more clergy ministers. The core region of the Lagan Valley to Larne belt was the only area where multiple Catholic priests signed applications. The high level of Presbyterian and Catholic clergy signatures, combined with the high percentage of first-class applications in the area, suggests the existence of a high degree of cooperation between the clergy of these two Churches. The cooperation is highlighted as 75 percent of schools in the core region had both Catholic and Presbyterian clergymen involved in the application process. It can thus be inferred that a tactical alliance formed between Presbyterian and Catholic clergymen in the core region after the creation of the national education system that led to a high rate of school establishment.





**Figure 6.** East Ulster clergy signatures of the various Churches, 1835.

### Local case study

A closer examination of the core area in the baronies of Lower Belfast and Carrickfergus reveals more detail of the interactions and strategies involved in the process of establishing national schools. In the area there were a number of individual clergymen who signed several applications for national schools. Out of the seventeen schools with Catholic clergy signatures in the first year of the system, eight were signed by the Catholic priest Arthur O'Neill, while three were signed by the Bishop of Connor-and-Down William Croll. In the case-study area, only six different Catholic priests signed applications for the seventeen schools. This pattern was mirrored by the Presbyterian ministers, where the same four ministers were involved in 70 percent of the national schools established with the involvement of Presbyterian clergy. William Glendy signed the application for five national schools, while William Heron signed four applications in the two baronies. The area surrounding Carrickfergus provides a good example of the local interaction of the clergy, as all eight national schools established in the initial years were jointly signed by the Presbyterian ministers William Flinter and James Seaton Reid. It is significant to note that the Presbyterian clergy involved in establishing schools in the region were not part of the Synod of Ulster, with many being members of the Presbytery of Antrim, thus highlighting the importance of regional actors on local actions. The repeated signature of a few clergymen of the various faiths indicated a tactical push to establish national schools in the area by both Churches which therefore dominated the network of social relations involved in education in the area.

The tactical alliance between the clergy was illustrated by the various ministers of different faiths jointly involved in several schools. Out of the five applications signed by William Glendy, three were also signed by Arthur O'Neill, a Catholic priest. In the Larne area, Arthur O'Neill also signed the application for four schools with another Presbyterian minister, J. C. Ledlie. Ledlie was reported to have stated that the system brought significant benefit to the area and confirmed that there was true cooperation between the clergy, stating "some of the clergy [...] have cooperated in the management of schools; clergymen of all persuasions attend [...] examinations; and no clergyman of any denomination has made any formal opposition to a national school."<sup>47</sup> In this locality a small number of Presbyterian ministers became patrons to the vast majority of national schools. Given that none of the schools were given grants for building a schoolhouse, it is very possible that they were already in existence, under the patronage of the Presbyterian ministers, and were subsequently transferred to the national system. The fact that the clergy were working together in the establishment and operation of the schools that were most likely previously Presbyterian schools suggests that the clergy of both Churches took a tactical position to cooperate in transferring schools to the national system.

These local relationships differed in the northern parts of the east-Ulster region, where the density of national schools was significantly lower. In the baronies of Cary, Dunluce Lower, and Glenarm in the north of Antrim the local clergy were not significantly active in the cooperation or establishment of national schools. The lack of activity of the clergy was not matched by the laity, as there were a large number of signatures from lay people of all faiths. The Catholic clergy were the most active of the clergy in signing applications, but again it was only single priests involved in school establishment. The Catholic community, both clergy and laity, attempted to establish national education in this area, but the lack of cooperation with other actors led to low densities. The isolated activity of the Catholic community is backed up by the fact that it was the only place in the east-Ulster region where the majority of the patrons were either Catholic priests or laity. The lack of cooperation between the clergy outside the initial core region was highlighted when the Catholic priest in Drummale in west Antrim, Daniel Curoe, discussed the establishment of national schools in his parish. In reference to the communication with the Protestant clergyman

of the parish he stated that "on my first attempting to connect the school with the New Board [of National Education] in March 1832 I applied to [the Protestant clergyman] for his co-operation; he replied, that he felt a delicacy and a reluctance to co-operate with me."<sup>48</sup>

In the initial period after the creation of the national system, the state's capacity to supply funds for education led to the tactical tie between a body of Presbyterians, Catholics, and the Commissioners in the core region of east-Ulster. Variations in the behavior of these actors, and the influence over the local management of the actors at different scales, such as the Synod of Ulster and the Catholic bishops, resulted in the strategic ties being localized to a specific area in a crescent from the Lagan Valley to Larne. The rationale of the state required the Presbyterian clergy to cooperate with the Catholic clergy to implement their strategy in this area. The Catholic clergy were active in national-school establishment across the region, and it is possible that the clergy saw the link with the institutionally strong Presbyterian Church, and the government rationale of integrating Catholics, as a way to strengthen their influence in the educational landscape of the area. In other areas with lower densities this tactical alliance was not as present, which illustrates that the behavior of actors varied over space and therefore strategies of the various actors were driven by localized social relations. As such, outside the core area the responsibility fell to other actors, such as landlords and other influential lay members of a community, to establish national schools. These actors did not possess the same institutional strength to implement a significant spatial strategy and therefore often acted in isolation. The less complex social network in the other areas of this region, and the reduced involvement of the clergy, resulted in the lack of a common interest and therefore less activity with regard to national-school establishment.

Technologies of government can be effective only if they tie various actors together and give them a common goal.<sup>49</sup> The intervention of the state with the introduction of a national system of education that had specific regulations, application criteria, and inspections, resulted in the formation of new sorts of local social relations. Local actors developed a common interest to acquire state funds for education, which resulted in the development of local alliances that interacted with the state to achieve this goal. In this way, the introduction of national education as a governmental technology shifted the nature of social relations in Ireland such that local actors came under the surveillance of the British state through their own self-interest. Relationships were thus established between the Commissioners of National Education and actors in other socio-spatial domains and were consolidated to form unique networks of relations, with a diverse range of actors linked through expertise and disciplinary techniques, with the power of the system distributed through the network.

## Conclusion

The study of national-school establishment in pre-Famine Ireland showed the emergence of certain regions. The various regions were not the result of independent events, but were formed through social processes situated in their historical context, which stemmed from the social relations and interactions that were specific to a localized area. Relationships established between the Commissioners of National Education and actors in other socio-spatial domains were consolidated to form a network of relations.<sup>50</sup> The structure and regulations of the national system were important as they created a central-local management system that linked the state officials, in the form of the Commissioners of National Education and their inspectors, to the wider social environment. The interplay between the governmental rationale, the strategies of state agents, and wider social networks was central in the emergence of a regional dimension to the national education system.

The national education system resulted in the creation of a differential spatial web of relations and interactions across the country. The examination of a localized case study illustrated



how this differential web of relations led to the adoption or relative non-adoption of national education across space. The nature of school establishment resulted in local actors having different abilities in pursuing strategies, which were shaped and constrained by the regulations of the system and the rationale of various actors on a local level. The influence of regional actors further complicated the strategic networks, as the strategies of institutions that functioned on many scales shaped local strategies. An example of this was seen with the opposition of Archbishop John McHale to the national system, which represented his wider nationalist viewpoint and opposition to the colonial civilizing mission of the British state in Ireland. The wider rationale and strategy of McHale influenced the local clergy in the West with regards to national education and greatly affected the establishment of national schools throughout the region. Government in pre-Famine Ireland was therefore the domain of strategies and techniques where different forces sought to render programs such as national education operable and, as a result, connections were formed between the rationales and aspirations of central authorities and the activities of social groups and individuals.<sup>51</sup> It is important to note that the introduction of the system itself influenced the nature of these social relations. The degree of integration, the incorporation of the influential actors at various scales, and spatial variation in the emergence and development of the national system all affected the nature of social ties and their impact upon educational interaction.<sup>52</sup> In this way sub-national regions formed as sites of social relations and were reliant upon social and historical processes while simultaneously formative of society and history.<sup>53</sup>

The interconnectedness of interest and rationales at various scales show how the essentially local issue of schools became tied to larger political matters, such as the opposition to the intrusion of the British state in Irish matters and the increase of influences of other actors. The local issue of the establishment of schools represented a clash in mentalities and rationalities, with the transforming governmental rationality of the state conflicting with the pastoral power of the Churches and ultimately influencing the larger political matters such as the legitimization of the Union. In this way, associations were established between a variety of local and regional actors who sought to enhance their own powers by accessing state capacities so that they could function to their own advantage.<sup>54</sup> When combined with the liberal rationale of governmentality, and the attempt to establish a self-regulating population that acted within their liberties, it was seen that the national education system depended on the formation of strategic ties at a locality. The strategic ties between the Catholic and Presbyterian clergy in the establishment of national schools in east Ulster, and the activities of the Synod of Ulster in this region, illustrate the interaction of local issues of school establishment and how it became tied into larger political matters.

The introduction of national education represents the attempts of the British state to civilize the country and legitimize the Union and left a lasting colonial legacy. The education of children of different creeds in the same classroom without regard to religion was an attempt to reduce sectarian conflict in the times of the tithe war while challenging the position that the Established Church held in Ireland. The control of school regulations meant the British state were able to influence the conduct of the Irish youth and, combined with the creation of textbooks specifically for the system, attempted to normalize the ideology of imperialism, legitimize British culture, and secure the Union in Ireland. The most significant colonial impact, and legacy, of national education was the restructuring of local social relations. The central-local management system resulted in local actors, especially Catholic clergymen, becoming tied into the actions of government. The incorporation of the local community into the state structure also resulted in the assimilation of a whole range of independent educational networks into the state system, and resulted in the modification of these networks in-line with the rationale of government. The placing of local actors under the regulations of the system, while also being placed under

the surveillance of the British administration, resulted in the establishment and engineering of social norms that extended well beyond the walls of the schools. The national education system ultimately increased the influence of the state over local actors as it extended central surveillance over the system. The activities of the inspectorate, combined with the regulations of the system such as the need for annual returns from each school, threw a web of visibility over the local and regional actors within the system. In this way the conduct of actors was shaped through constant observation, judgment, and the capacity for corrective action.<sup>55</sup> The colonial context and legacy therefore meant that the British state-regulated system of national education in Ireland extended the power and influence of the state beyond the pupil to the conduct of the Irish population, as national schools represented minute “social observatories” that exercised regular supervision over actors at various scales of the system, and ultimately society.<sup>56</sup>

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# The Press and the Pledge: Father Theobald Mathew's 1843 Temperance Tour of Britain

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**ABSTRACT:** This article examines Father Theobald Mathew's temperance tour of Britain in 1843. Estimates vary, but by this point some six million people in Ireland may have made a personal pledge to abstain from consuming alcohol. This pledge involved more than individual transformation, however. Building on recent Mathew scholarship, this article explores how, through its methods of pledges, processions, and meetings, temperance offered a new mode of moral politics. It is widely appreciated that Mathew's mission became entangled in the Repeal politics of Daniel O'Connell; using newspaper sources and other contemporary accounts, the paper argues that their campaigns instantiated differently drawn scalar moral visions, and different ways of imaginatively connecting temperate bodies to broader social and political aims that were mobilized around the category of the "nation."

## Introduction: the politics of temperance

For centuries past, drunkenness was the shame and the bane of Ireland; an Irishman had become proverbial for intoxication.<sup>1</sup>

Before the great temperance movement had taken place in Ireland," the Capuchin Friar Father Theobald Mathew (1790-1856) declared on a visit to London in August 1843, "that unfortunate country was stained with crimes of the greatest enormity in consequence of the habitual drunkenness of the people. No country in the world was ever affected with that sin so much as Ireland, and to be an Irishman was almost to be branded as a drunkard."<sup>2</sup> Ireland, Mathew's speech suggests, had been a synonym for drunkenness. Frank Mathew, Theobald's brother's grandson, wrote in 1890 that drunkenness was "the great fault of the peasantry, and was almost universal among them," believing that drink "made their day-dreams splendid."<sup>3</sup> Such enduring tropes—evident in travel writing of the period—often tied concerns about land tenure and the organization of agriculture to the role of alcohol as a cultural prop and as a potential cause of poverty and disorder.<sup>4</sup> Such stereotypes were not necessarily accurate, of course, and official statistics for production and apprehensions for drunkenness were more indices of regulation than offences against the law. But they nevertheless performed important cultural work, notably on the other side of the Irish Sea: as Simon Potter notes in a recent review, British attitudes from the 1798 rebellion through to the Land War often characterized the Irish as "ignorant, savage, uncivilised, superstitious, priest-ridden, lazy and land-hungry."<sup>5</sup> There is, as Potter describes, a complex historiographical debate over such representations and the work antonymic civilizing discourses did to justify British government in Ireland.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, as Mathew's declaration in London intimates, such characterizations formed an important underpinning to the emerging politics of temperance, to a dramatic movement that challenged such representations of Irish drunkenness.

Temperance, to quote James Kneale, “was not an aspect of bourgeois ‘social control’ [...] or a disciplinary crusade, producing new mechanisms for subduing an unruly mass of drinkers.”<sup>7</sup> Rather, in Britain, at least, its emergence in the 1820s and 1830s was linked to the articulation of a vision of a society freed from the social and economic consequences of alcohol consumption. Scholars have connected this to the effects of the liberalizing Beer Act of 1830, which had led to an increase in the number of premises selling beer.<sup>8</sup> Reproducing an early distinction between types of drinks, a parliamentary select committee in 1834 – whose radical chair James Silk Buckingham (1786-1855) would play a prominent part in Mathew’s visit to London in 1843 – blamed spirits rather than beer for a range of personal, social and moral problems.<sup>9</sup> But this anti-spirits stance was itself challenged by an emerging culture of total abstinence, or teetotalism, with pioneers such as Joseph Livesey in Preston having made public pledges to abstain from all alcohol.<sup>10</sup> This radical model of total abstinence symbolically demanded that pre-existing social structures such as the pub be challenged by counter-attractions such as reading rooms and meeting halls.<sup>11</sup> Notably, as Henry Yeomans has recently put it, building lasting temperance relied on “transforming how people perceive[d] themselves.”<sup>12</sup>

The teetotal message was embraced in Cork, Ireland, by a Quaker named William Martin, who established a total abstinence society in 1835.<sup>13</sup> It could count amongst its members a Church of Ireland minister, a Unitarian merchant and lay-Catholics, but Martin’s masterstroke was to persuade a Capuchin friar, Theobald Mathew, to join its ranks. Born at Thomastown, in County Tipperary, in 1790, a descendent of a wealthy Anglo-Irish family, Mathew had moved to Cork in 1814.<sup>14</sup> Having worked with Martin at the town’s House of Industry and seen there the damage caused by drink, in April 1838 Mathew agreed to sign the register of the new Cork Total Abstinence Society.<sup>15</sup> By August 1839 CTAS claimed twenty-four thousand members. Once Mathew started travelling – to Limerick and Waterford in the winter of 1839, and then across Ireland in 1840 – he began to plant and draw together temperance communities in a broader national network.<sup>16</sup> At the center of these emerging “routes and routines,” to quote David Nally, was the pledge.<sup>17</sup> The candidates – or postulants – would kneel before Mathew in a semi-circle and repeat the words of the pledge:

I promise, with the Divine assistance, as long as I shall continue a member of the Total Abstinence Society, to abstain from all intoxicating liquors, except for medicinal or sacramental purposes, and to prevent, as much as possible, by advice and example, drunkenness in others.<sup>18</sup>

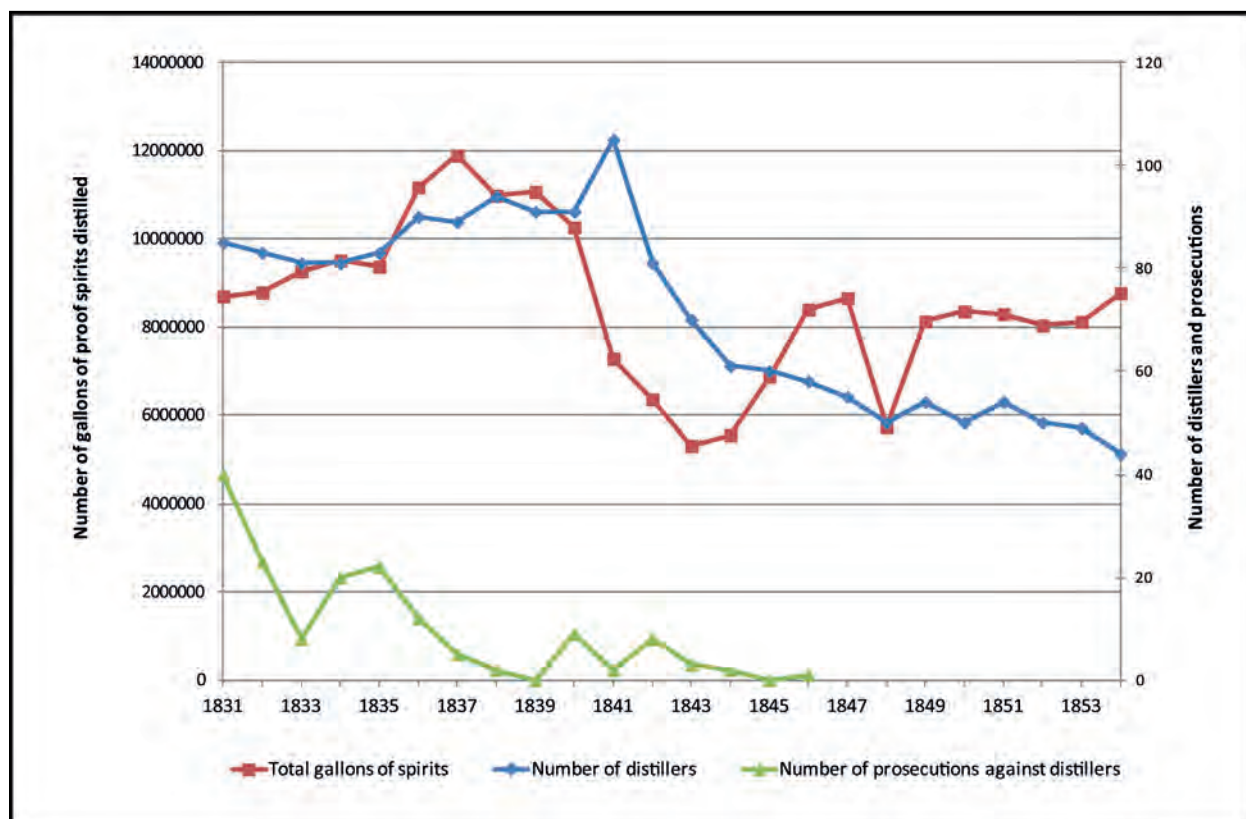
He would then place his hand on each person’s head, tracing the sign of the cross and giving them a blessing. Ideally, they would then have their names and addresses entered in the Society’s registers and receive a medal and rule card (those with means being asked to pay 8d.).<sup>19</sup> The nature of this pledge came under sustained scrutiny. Mathew repeatedly rejected claims that the pledge was a “vow,” telling one correspondent in 1840 that it was a “resolution to perform a moral act.”<sup>20</sup> Some expressed concern that Mathew was appealing to supposed Celtic and Catholic superstitions about the powers of priests: in other words that there was no moral transformation.<sup>21</sup>

The centrality of claims over morals to temperance disputes is especially significant. We get a sense of this in letters from the pastor of the Independent Church in Cork, Alexander King, to Mathew and to Daniel O’Connell. In November 1842 he urged Mathew to expand the moral character of the people who had taken the pledge. “It is in, and by society, character is generally formed,” he told Mathew, arguing that temperance was only a first step towards the improvement and elevation of society.<sup>22</sup> The pledge brought people under “the plastic power of reason and religion,” putting them “in a position of susceptibility of improvement.” It was up to Mathew to



see that the “moral power of Christianity” was harnessed to improve individuals and thus “elevate the intellectual and moral character of Ireland.”<sup>23</sup> But what would this improvement look like? King had already written to O’Connell, celebrated for his campaign for Catholic emancipation. “You are the man to mould the mind of the Nation,” he wrote, arguing that from his privileged position he could secure a heritage of “mental and moral dignity.”<sup>24</sup> By appealing to Mathew to consider society and to O’Connell the “Nation,” King was connecting what might have been read as matters of individual conscience to the much more extensive moral geographies of the social and the political.<sup>25</sup>

Various accounts suggest that by 1843 some six million Irishmen and women had taken the pledge.<sup>26</sup> The production of spirits as recorded by the government—hence not necessarily a reliable index—had fallen, while anecdotal reports also hinted at the improved conduct and, often, appearance, of the people.<sup>27</sup> Figure 1 shows that the recorded production of spirits fell steadily in the peak years of Mathew’s movement, as did the recorded number of distillers. Even acknowledging Elizabeth Malcolm’s claim that subsequent government attempts to increase duties probably stimulated illicit production, the impact on government revenues is worth considering.<sup>28</sup> The Cambridge-trained cleric William Wight reported that in 1842-43 the government lost £300,000 in revenue on drink. Though cutting the tax-take might have appealed to Repealers—Mathew even warned drinkers that their hard-earned money was “transferred to a foreign country”<sup>29</sup>—Wight reckoned that revenues from Ireland that year rose by £90,000. He suggested that people might be switching their spending to morally more desirable (though still taxable) commodities.<sup>30</sup> It is to the entwining of Repeal and temperance debates with this recurrent theme of morality that I want to turn. The next section presents temperance as a form of moral regulation and examines the moral visions that Mathew and O’Connell promoted.



**Figure 1.** Recorded production of spirits in Ireland (source BPP 1854 (175) LXV, 445 “Distillers, &c.”).

## Moral regulation

The scale of Mathew's movement prompts an important reflection on what James Vernon has termed the broader "public political sphere" beyond the franchise.<sup>31</sup> It is important to consider the relationship between personal practices and the creation of spaces of temperance politics. With badges and banners and organizational structures to unite and empower, Vernon suggests that in Britain temperance should be seen in relation to an emerging party political culture.<sup>32</sup> These united identities were performed in mass-participation social events such as parades. Bailey, Harvey and Brace note in their study of Methodist temperance in Cornwall that religious doctrines helped routinize and inscribe on the body particular kinds of moral behavior.<sup>33</sup> They also marked the spaces through which people paraded when they took to the streets with their banners, accompanied by temperance bands. Mathew defended the rights of people who had labored all week to "recreate" themselves on Sunday afternoons in such bands, though some played at Repeal meetings against his wishes.<sup>34</sup> That word "recreate" is significant here; it hints at both recreation, as in leisure, and it indicates that participants were morally re-created through routinization and inscription, through what Mark Billinge has described as temporal strategies, as in how to use Sundays, and spatial strategies such as the creation of normatively "good" spaces.<sup>35</sup> This relied on replacing the public house—which Kneale notes was widely read as "democratic and popular"—with spaces and times where people could meet to read and talk.<sup>36</sup> Mathew's friend Charles Gavan Duffy, a Young Islander and co-founder of *The Nation* newspaper, hoped that the teetotal societies could "become the clubs, the adult schools, the lecture-rooms, the parish parliaments of sober people."<sup>37</sup> This new temperance society—by which I mean socialization rather than a particular institution—was at odds with models of boisterous and unruly public assembly. And the regeneration of society was symbolically realized, Paul Townend perceptively notes, in the way sober men and women could enjoy each other's "rational company" at events such as soirées, something Mathew was also forced to defend.<sup>38</sup> In this environment, Townend suggests, women were better able to exercise "moral influence" over their sober men in this "transformed public sphere."<sup>39</sup>

In his analysis of English temperance, Michael Roberts notes that, following franchise reform in 1832, "the temperance movement acted both as a claim to citizenship and a training for it."<sup>40</sup> But if, as Pamela Gilbert has also argued for England, "[t]he imagined community that legitimated citizenship was the nation," then, I would suggest that by creating a new kind of moral community Irish temperance was making it possible to imagine a new kind of nation.<sup>41</sup> This was the result of an uneasy alliance of modes of ethical self-formation—or the government "of self by self" that delivered individual freedom from drink—and an alternative scalar vision of governmental self-formation that challenged the notion that the British presence in Ireland brought civility. I propose that temperance can be understood as a moral mentality and, following Michel Foucault, as a practice of freedom.<sup>42</sup> John Quinn links Mathew's studiously non-sectarian and anti-confrontational campaign to a desire to gain the "goodwill of the British authorities and the Ascendancy."<sup>43</sup> But this, Quinn argues, made Mathew "a man behind his times."<sup>44</sup> According to Frank Mathew, the Friar would rebuke people for "their own folly," rather than simply blame English misrule.<sup>45</sup> By individualizing faults and failings he sought to help the Irish free themselves from the "degradation and shame" wrought by drink and so raise their children to be doctors, councilors, and judges. People freed from drink made better subjects, then. On those terms, freedom from drink was to Repealers no freedom at all. To return to Foucault, freedom is also the product of "acting ethically," of having fuller relationships with others; but care of the self only comes about where there are pre-existing conditions of liberty.<sup>46</sup> For O'Connell, temperance was

a means to a very different end. This reading saw individual freedom as a precursor to political self-sovereignty, calling into question what Philip Howell terms the “moral scale of the nation itself.”<sup>47</sup>

O’Connell told a Dublin meeting in April 1841 that temperance was producing “a moral power, a magical intellectual force.”<sup>48</sup> It had given him a “thoroughly obedient and docile people to teach,” said one biographer in 1885, making his large and orderly “monster” meetings possible.<sup>49</sup> The repeated references to morality and order are telling. O’Connell went on: “[M]y friends, no country that conquers its own vices will ever be a slave to, or conquered by, any other on the face of the earth.”<sup>50</sup> A week later, *The Times* cast temperance as a kind of Trojan horse for Repeal.<sup>51</sup> For *The Freeman’s Journal*, this attack went too far, the paper lamenting “that even our morality should cause us to be assailed by the English press.” Did it follow, then, “that teetotallers should have no politics?”<sup>52</sup> Mathew knew that people could not be expected to give up on politics simply because they had given up drink.<sup>53</sup> All he could do was repeat that teetotalism did not control people’s political opinions and demand that temperance meetings be kept free from political discussions.<sup>54</sup> For this reason, he was nervous about appearing alongside O’Connell in the Cork Easter teetotal procession in 1842, an event that apparently brought two hundred thousand people onto the streets. On Lancaster Quay, O’Connell knelt down to receive Mathew’s blessing, to the recorded delight of onlookers.<sup>55</sup> Mathew wrote to the Dublin Quaker teetotaller Richard Allen, regretting “the insidious efforts to give to our society a political coloring, and to invoke a gloomy fanatic cry against us.”<sup>56</sup>

The second half of this paper examines Mathew’s tour of England between June 1 and September 15, 1843, a period when Repeal activity was intensifying. The physical distance between Mathew and O’Connell symbolically highlights their contrasting moral visions, with the tour serving as an opportunity for Mathew to build the movement among people “who were alien to him in race and creed.”<sup>57</sup> While Mathew emphasized the separation of temperance from Repeal politics, I will argue that the reporting of Mathew’s meetings reveals that temperance assembly was, nevertheless, political.

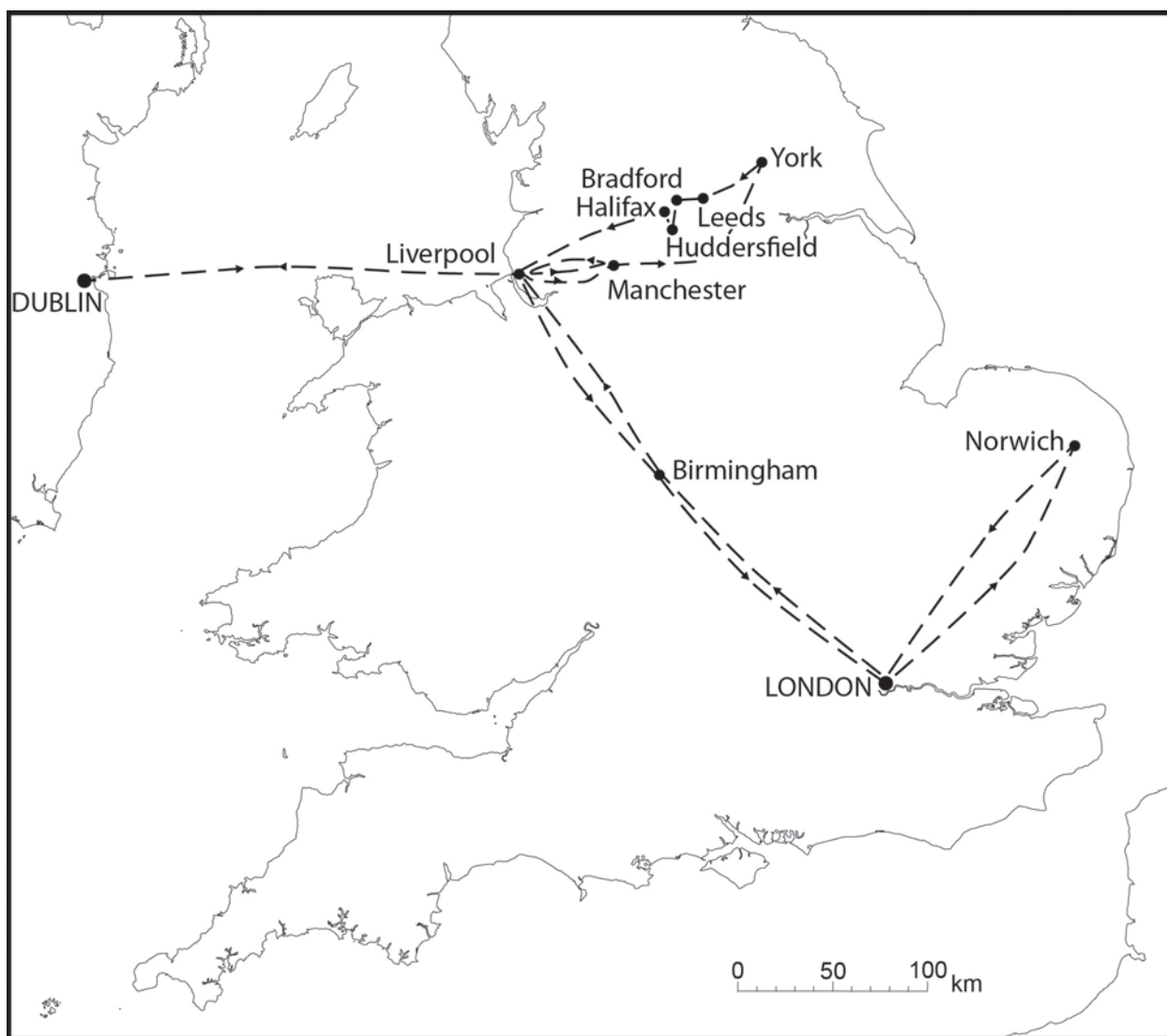
### The pledge and the press

Having docked at Liverpool, Mathew headed for York where he had been invited to a conference of northern teetotallers (see Figure 2).<sup>58</sup> I want to note, briefly, the importance of correspondence and correspondents in shaping Mathew’s travel.<sup>59</sup> Newspaper coverage of his work in Ireland meant that he was eagerly anticipated by teetotallers and spoken about by opponents. Speaking before Mathew’s arrival, Edward Grubb—a founder member of Preston total abstinence—launched into the editor of the *Yorkshire Gazette* for criticizing temperance “processions, harangues, and tea drinkings.” Grubb argued that they had every “right to parade the town,” defending their work against a rather common charge that it was somehow akin to socialism and, therefore, presumably anti-bourgeois. Tellingly, the meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the editors of three other local papers for their “disinterested” reports.<sup>60</sup> And parade again they would, with a procession through the suburbs and town to a place called St. George’s Fields, where Mathew administered the pledge. As well as containing Mathew in a carriage-and-four, the procession included teetotallers wearing medals, sashes, and white roses, from different religious and practical causes. The spectacle was also witnessed by the local Catholic bishop and two local Catholic noblemen, whose nearby estates Mathew would visit. Speaking later that day, Mathew referred to anonymous letters that he had received in York accusing him of “imposing upon the superstitions of the people of Ireland, by substituting teetotalism for the Gospel.” Bluntly, he told his audience, temperance was the “foundation of every Gospel virtue,” to which end he had paid for and distributed one thousand copies of the Bible and was having a 6d.-edition



printed to make the Bible accessible to “every teetotal head of a family in Ireland.”<sup>61</sup> Echoing Alexander King that temperance put people in a position of “susceptibility of improvement,” Mathew’s defense was that temperance made other things possible.

The pattern for Mathew’s stay in England was set, with regular reports of processions, charity sermons and non-denominational meetings. He administered the pledge where possible and frequently confronted the issue of Repeal. At a breakfast meeting in Leeds, chaired by Edward Baines of the Leeds Mercury, and surrounded by temperance advocates of different religious persuasions, Mathew admitted that some teetotallers were “partisans of Repeal” but he made the point that Ireland was a country of Repealers. Three hundred thousand people could now meet and disperse without incident, when previously fifty had been unable to do so without trouble. “If I am to be blamed upon that ground,” he said, “I must bear it.”<sup>62</sup> Mathew asked his audience to be “temperate also in their teetotalism” and “to be united,” as he hoped were the people of “distracted” Ireland.<sup>63</sup> He travelled on to Bradford, Huddersfield and Halifax before visiting



**Figure 2.** Towns on Father Mathew’s temperance tour.

Liverpool and Manchester. There would be no temperance procession in Liverpool, the Liberal mayor Robertson Gladstone being concerned about potential sectarian tensions.<sup>64</sup> Another was cancelled in Manchester after Mathew was delayed.<sup>65</sup> In these northern cities, he was careful to attend to the immigrant Irish communities, often delivering the pledge in Irish. Six days in Manchester apparently won eighty thousand people to the cause and three in Liverpool some sixty thousand.<sup>66</sup> In Manchester he reportedly offered this blessing:

May God bless you, and grant you strength and grace to keep your promise! May God in his mercy grant you every corporal blessing and every spiritual blessing! I will now mark each one of you with a sign of the cross, that you may bear in mind that you have sealed your promise with the sign of man's redemption; and should the enemy tempt you to sin again, you may say to the tempter, "Do not molest me; for I bear the sign of man's redemption, by which I have sealed my promise and pledge."<sup>67</sup>

The value of the pledge as a kind of protection against future temptation is important. To some critics the reference to sin and the invocation of God's assistance for a healthy body and soul made the religious status of the pledge somewhat ambiguous. The reference to corporal and spiritual blessings might call to mind Foucault's theory of pastoral power, but it is important to note that total abstinence was not a religion; rather, Mathew told a Liverpool meeting that it was the "superstructure" on which it could be built.<sup>68</sup> For several days on two visits to Liverpool, Mathew used a cemetery adjacent to St. Anthony's church on Scotland Road to administer the pledge. The setting and the accompanying clergyman on the platform—as many as nineteen on July 17, 1843—surely heightened the sense of a church-sanctioned ceremony?<sup>69</sup> Thomas Carlyle happened to be passing, and wrote to his wife to explain how he had been attracted by the flags and brass. He found Mathew distributing the pledge to a "lost-looking squadron." "I almost cried to listen to him," he wrote, "and could not but lift my broadbrim [hat] at the end, when he called for God's blessing on the vow these poor wretches had taken. I have seen nothing so religious since I set on my travels as the squalid scene of this day."<sup>70</sup> Thomas Carlyle's reflections reveal a belief that these squalid masses needed moral training and direction. In this context, Mathew must have seemed like an effective leader. But, as he travelled, debates about the nature of the pledge helped limit the appeal of his project.

From Liverpool, Mathew headed to Birmingham, though finding them unprepared he travelled directly to London. As well as divisions between anti-spirits activists and total abstainers, London's teetotal groups disagreed over whether a postulant should be expected to pledge not to provide other people with drink.<sup>71</sup> Leading temperance figures such as J.S. Buckingham and Earl Stanhope, president of the Westminster Friendly Temperance Society, which had sent an invitation to Mathew as early as 1840, hoped the Friar's visit would unite and promote different temperance interests.<sup>72</sup> His work in the capital began in earnest on July 31, 1843 on Commercial Road in the East End, on the site of the soon-to-be-built church of St. Mary and St. Michael. He was late, East-End Catholics apparently having insisted on parading him to the site. Earl Stanhope arrived at 1:00 p.m. and eulogized Mathew's movement before taking the pledge in public in a group of some three hundred people. It is no surprise that the papers began to debate the significance of the pledge. The Times reported Mathew as administering a vow, though he sought to correct them that it was simply a resolution. This was more than a trivial question of semantics. The Catholic Tablet noted that, in contrast to a vow to God, there was nothing inherently sinful in breaking the pledge. Sin would only result from actions committed after a return to drink. It is significant for how we theorize the politics of assembly at Mathew's meetings but also religion in the public

sphere – specifically with regard to what Habermas has termed “will formation” – that the paper identified distinguishing features of the pledge.<sup>73</sup> It was a “public” resolution, whose “solemnity” would impress the postulant. But administering the pledge to groups was also important; it made it a “joint” resolution, which deepened “the individual force of purpose.” Anyone breaking their pledge would thus risk falling in the estimation of their peers. It was this sense of collective enterprise that would bind the group, not the feeling of a promise to God.<sup>74</sup>

Mathew came under attack from a group convinced that there was no legitimate reason to make such a declaration. The English Churchman argued that through baptism and confirmation people had effectively pledged to abstain from “carnal desires of the flesh,” while they professed in their catechism to keep their bodies “in temperance, soberness, and chastity.” It asked whether Mathew’s “theatrical performance” would “secure a larger share of the Holy Spirit” than would be received by dutiful sacramental Christians.<sup>75</sup> Ahead of an expected visit by Mathew to Cambridge, “A Churchman” told the town’s high church Chronicle that as they had never made such sacramental professions Dissenters would be free to participate.<sup>76</sup> The hostility in Cambridge was certainly vocal. “I trust every true Protestant will scorn the man in Cambridge,” wrote one correspondent to the Chronicle.<sup>77</sup> But Mathew never made it, some accounts suggesting that the Mayor refused the use of the town hall.<sup>78</sup> The Cambridge Independent Press reprinted correspondence between Mathew and the local temperance secretary Eli Walker, the Friar explaining that he had been delayed in London and had been unable “to control circumstances.”<sup>79</sup> But he did head from London to Norwich where, at a temperance rally, Bishop Edward Stanley repented of his previous hostility to Mathew, asking the audience to receive him on his “sacred mission [...] from a distant country.” The visit aroused some hostility, with opponents posting criticisms on walls and in shop windows that the pledge was a kind of Catholic pseudo-religion. They also raised the matter of repeal, which Mathew met with his customary argument that teetotalism did not “control the political opinions of persons” but simply made their meeting possible in a way that had previously been unimaginable.<sup>80</sup>

From Norwich he travelled to Birmingham, where the Catholic bishop Nicholas Wiseman again probed the nature of the pledge. He noted that some preferred the idea of promising rather than resolving to avoid alcohol. Wiseman put it to Mathew that rather than making a promise to God, postulants “promised society – they promised their wives – they promised their children – they promised themselves.” In some accounts, such as in *The Times* and the *Illustrated London News*, Mathew was recorded as saying: “Precisely so.”<sup>81</sup> The *Metropolitan Temperance Intelligencer and Journal*, the organ of the Metropolitan Total Abstinence Society, thought that most people would feel they were making “a promise to God, as well as to those around them.”<sup>82</sup> Though Wiseman reckoned the distinction would be widely understood in Ireland, *The Times* expressed its belief that the “kneeling crowds, the benediction, the solemn promise made by the recipients” and the “sacred character” of Mathew all suggested that the pledge was a vow.<sup>83</sup> And it seems that Mathew lost the support of *The Tablet*’s editor Frederick Lucas here; having written to a number of Irish priests, Lucas claims to have discovered at least fourteen different views on the nature of the pledge.<sup>84</sup>

The public nature of this discussion is worth considering. Newspapers were also used to advertise, such as the 2s. required to join Mathew for breakfast at the Mechanics’ Hall in Leeds, the 2s. 6d. for gallery seats at his charity sermon at Mount St. Marie Catholic Chapel in Bradford, or the time he would start his work at St. Anthony’s in Liverpool.<sup>85</sup> But coverage of the meetings and speeches was even more important if the events were to have a wider impact.<sup>86</sup> Jane Carlyle seems to have feared such publicity. At Commercial Road, Mathew had helped her onto the platform to witness him administer the pledge. She told her husband that she could not sleep that night, for the “pale faces I had seen haunted me.” She admitted that she would have taken the pledge



there and then had she not “feared it would be put in the papers.”<sup>87</sup> Others had more confidence. Administering the pledge to Henry FitzAlan-Howard, Earl of Arundel and Surrey, at Golden Lane near the Barbican, Mathew said that it “was indeed delightful” to hear the Earl’s pledge in public. The Earl was followed in the next group by twenty-one stokers from a local gas works who, like the Earl, were presented with silver medals, Mathew reportedly quipping that when they “came possessed of £500 each they could pay him for them.”<sup>88</sup> The previous day Mathew had taken the Marchioness of Wellesley’s pledge in private, though she apparently expressed her desire that her example would encourage others. At the Wellington Cricket Ground near Sloane Square, Mathew made capital from her “glorious example”, praising women for their “moral courage and virtue.”<sup>89</sup> But the Earl’s public pledge was doubly significant, not only for its visibility but also its proximity to the stokers.

Here was Mathew’s method: appealing to people to come forward in small groups meant that this was the very opposite of a faceless, disorderly crowd. Such orderly association would be seen by casual observers, while Mathew knew about the power of the press. The attitude of *The Times*, which had earlier likened temperance to treason, stands out. Mathew singled it out, asking for three cheers for “*The Times altered*,” and elsewhere thanked it for the “partiality they had shown to him.”<sup>90</sup> Presumably such praise was an attempt to generate press coverage; indeed, Mathew even suggested that next to God the press was the main reason for the “success which has attended the great moral movement, total abstinence.”<sup>91</sup> The papers, too, could report on different groups, such as stokers or schoolchildren, their proximity a central part of the universalizing aims and benefits of temperance. Seeing such scenes would encourage others to come forward. The papers, meanwhile, were also watching each other. *The Intelligencer*, for example, was critical of the “No Popery” of the *Morning Herald* and complained that *The Tablet* was ignorant of the principles of teetotalism.<sup>92</sup> While Irish papers such as the *Freeman’s Journal* were keen to update their readers on Mathew’s progress in Britain, British editors were deciding how much coverage to afford events in Ireland.

### **The Irish in London**

On the same day that Mathew was teaching the Irish poor of St. Giles in London that they could challenge the coding of their area as a “byword and a scoff” for drunkenness, Daniel O’Connell was out in Roscommon. There he had argued that “no other country could exhibit so much force coupled with so much propriety of conduct.”<sup>93</sup> Now, days after his famous monster meeting at Tara, he hailed “the mighty moral miracle of five million men pledged against intoxicating liquors” as “the precursor of the liberty of Ireland.” If he “had to go to battle,” he told them, “he should have the strong and steady teetotallers with him – the teetotal bands would play before them and animate them in their time of peril.” Together, he said, they could fight any army: “Yes, teetotalism was the first sure ground on which rested their hope of sweeping away Saxon domination” in Ireland.<sup>94</sup> Their second hope, he said, was their patience, virtue, and goodness. They could defeat Wellington and Peel by moral force. At this point Mathew and O’Connell were some 600 km apart; imaginatively it seems they were even more distant. For the following morning, Mathew was at the house of the Conservative MP Colonel Dawson-Damer to have breakfast with some seventy members of the nobility, including Lord and Lady Palmerston and the Marquis of Clanricarde. Wellington and Peel were to have been there, but their absence was perhaps accounted for by the impending close of the parliamentary session, Peel sending apologies that he had been detained at Windsor.<sup>95</sup>

Readers of the *Freeman’s Journal* could turn the page from news of the breakfast meeting to find John O’Connell quoting the *Morning Herald*’s account of the rest of Mathew’s day. Mathew had gone from Dawson-Damer’s to Deptford where the platform was rushed by anti-teetotallers

wearing pint pots, a satire on the temperance medal. This was not the only such incident. John O'Connell contrasted such disturbances with the orderly nature of the Repeal movement, built on the moral force of Mathew's message. Where was "civilization now," he asked?<sup>96</sup> The where was as important as the now, here. Irish morality stood in direct contrast to British incivility. Temporally, too, the now was a reference to self-sovereignty, a first step towards future political self-determination. Father John Moore, a Catholic priest at Virginia Street Chapel in London, made a similar critical comparison at one of Mathew's meetings near Regent's Park. Moore likened intemperance in England to a "worm gnawing [at] society." The report of his address is worth quoting in detail, because it reveals the power of collective re-creation:

England was renowned for her naval and military strength, but if other nations had not the power of sending 100,000 bayonets across the Atlantic to enslave far distant countries, and to drag their people into the same infamous vice of drunkenness—if other kingdoms had not this tyrannical power, which enabled them to command the ocean and bid defiance to the world, they had something greater—they had that virtue, that purity and innocence of mind, which could only be derived from the observance of that beautiful virtue, temperance (cheers). Where was the man who would tell him to-day that Ireland was not, morally speaking, infinitely superior to England (cries of "No, no," "Yes, yes," and some confusion, which was drowned in the vociferous cheering of the Irish portion of the people assembled).<sup>97</sup>

By any comparison with temperance speeches in those weeks—if accurately recorded—this was quite an extraordinary contribution, Moore's "moral imagination," to use Philip Howell's phrase, explicitly reflecting back on the failures of England.<sup>98</sup> But the English were not the target here; rather, the priest was appealing to the apathetic Irish in the metropolis to claim and practice their moral superiority (the *Chronicle* reported that though fifteen thousand visited the site during the day only twelve hundred to fourteen hundred took the pledge):

Father Moore concluded by declaring that Irishmen in England who did not come forward and take the pledge were no longer worthy of their country—they were abortions of Ireland, and were worse even than the wild Indians or the savage beasts of the field, who had already enlisted themselves under the banner of Father Mathew.<sup>99</sup>

It seems that some were reluctant to "come forward" lest it reduce their chances of being employed. Here we have to realize the centrality of the public house to the circuits of hiring and paying wages for professions such as coal-whippers (who unloaded coal from barges), an issue that was raised at one of the Commercial Road meetings at the same time as legislation was being debated in parliament.<sup>100</sup> Colm Kerrigan suggests that this anxiety about Irish jobs explains the reluctance of the local Catholic hierarchy to embrace Mathew. The Vicar Apostolic Dr. Griffiths was apparently worried that teetotalism would serve as another label with which to exclude the Irish.<sup>101</sup> Things may have been different further north, where, according to Ryan Dye, Mathew represented "the type of Irish Catholic that the [English] church wanted Irish migrants to emulate."<sup>102</sup> But by avoiding nationalist questions, Mathew may have alienated sections of the Irish poor.<sup>103</sup>

He must have been disappointed by this, particularly as it seems that the English contingent at his meetings was often motivated by curiosity rather than conversion. On a trip to Enfield, Mathew elaborated how, though drink may have been a particular problem for the Irish, it was never exclusively an Irish problem:

He said, it might be considered presumption on his part to address an English audience on the subject of temperance. It might be said, why did he not stop in Ireland? He could assure them that he came to this country on the most pressing invitations. He had another inducement also, and that was the fear of resisting the will of God; for he did believe from his heart that the cause of temperance was blessed with Divine influence. Irishmen had been a depraved race of beings through the baneful vice of drunkenness; but he was happy to say that they had now become greatly improved, and that improvement had been effected by the principles of total abstinence. Surely, then, if temperance was capable of effecting so much good in Ireland, it might be attended with similar beneficial results in this country.<sup>104</sup>

To achieve this, temperance could never be sectarian, a point Mathew reiterated with regard to the constitution of Irish temperance societies.<sup>105</sup> And it could not stop at the borders of Ireland. Elsewhere he gave examples of the scale of his moral vision. In Hackney, for example, he praised “Hindoos and Mahometans” for being favorable to total abstinence. Indeed, to demonstrate his central claim that total abstinence was good for health and morals he even went as far as to claim: “If there were no religion – if there were no hereafter – it was still better to have a sober population than a drunken one.”<sup>106</sup> But, self-evidently, despite some high-profile exceptions, Mathew’s hope that his trip would help build a new movement lacked the large-scale support he had found in Ireland. As a result, it seems only to have emphasized the differences that made what Ina Ferris terms the “awkward space of Union.”<sup>107</sup>

## Conclusion

Temperance and Repeal thrived on what Paul Townend terms the “parallel sense of personal degradation, and the humiliating condition of Ireland as a disparaged national entity.” Townend argues that they took root in the same soil: the “myth” of Ireland’s status as “a degraded colonial slave-state.”<sup>108</sup> Even if this hints at reasons why temperance won such support in Ireland, it does not quite explain Mathew’s attempt to build relations with non-Catholic and non-Irish temperance campaigners while in England. Townend implicitly recognizes the scalar politics at work, but there are subtle differences in Mathew’s and O’Connell’s moral mentalities. Mathew unequivocally connected freedom from drink to a recreated, regenerated Ireland. Frank Mathew argued that Theobald’s dream was that “Ireland should cease to be the Cinderella of the sisterhood, and should have equal rights and laws.” But, “he left others to decide whether Ireland should be ruled from Dublin or Westminster so long as it was ruled fairly.”<sup>109</sup> As such, he saw Repeal as a short-term issue – it would succeed or fail, but either way it would have to be resolved quickly. In scalar terms, temperance was a potentially limitless challenge. The apathy and antagonism that greeted him in certain quarters in London appear to have taken their toll, Frank Mathew concluding that the Friar returned to Ireland with “no belief in the Repeal Year day-dream.”<sup>110</sup> The central Repeal message, by contrast, was that the sovereignty of the self that was displayed by the temperate Irish preceded and made possible the kind of political sovereignty that others would deny to Ireland. In this sense, and in contrast to Mathew’s model, temperance was a means and not an end in itself. Freedom from drink was just the start; sobriety and order could be used to challenge the very moral scale and category of the “nation” that campaigners such as Mathew sought to improve.

I began this paper with an epigraph from the Halls. Samuel Hall published “A Letter to Irish Temperance Societies” in November 1843. He noted that in their earlier work they had challenged misrepresentations that surrounded Mathew’s campaign. Temperance, he said, had



given the Irish “an increased inclination to see, hear, think, and judge for yourselves.” Presenting the end of the Penal Laws and the passage of Catholic emancipation as “proof that England is determined to consider Ireland part of herself,” he complained of those who were striving after a vain and undesirable object. Repeal, he warned, would not deliver “ample employment and plenty of food.”<sup>111</sup> The government’s subsequent clampdown on O’Connell’s monster meetings in October 1843 and O’Connell’s imprisonment effectively finished the constitutional cause.<sup>112</sup> But so successful had O’Connell been in entangling Repeal with temperance that Mathew’s movement was also dealt a significant blow.<sup>113</sup> Its fate was largely sealed before the terrible famine years transformed Ireland’s population in a very different way.<sup>114</sup> But those skills of seeing, hearing and thinking that Hall identified perhaps had a deeper legacy. Paul Townend contends that CTAS’s legacy was “not so much a new standard of moral social behaviour,” but a new kind of politics, “a new benchmark for the potential of collective action in Ireland.”<sup>115</sup> Townend’s remark about behavior carries weight, because so much about temperance was prospective; it sold a brighter future. Various speakers at the London meetings made claims that temperance was not intrinsically religious or political, but instead made such professions possible. Though he outlined secular justifications for total abstinence, it is probably fairer to characterize Mathew’s own position as non-sectarian.<sup>116</sup> To say that temperance was not intrinsically religious belies the fact that Mathew’s mission was grounded in the transformation of private consciences, of souls and selves. Through its transformative potential, revealed in the structure of those London meetings, temperance was also always political. As is evident from the very public nature of the “pledge” – that promise to “society,” as Wiseman put it – the drama of temperance assembly held out the possibility of forging more than individual identities.<sup>117</sup>

### Acknowledgements

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### NOTES

- 1 Mr. and Mrs. S.C. [Samuel Carter and Anna Maria] Hall, *Ireland: Its Scenery, Character, &c. Vol. I* (London: How and Parsons, 1841), 33.
- 2 “Father Mathew at Fulham,” *Times*, August 11, 1843, 6.
- 3 Frank Mathew, *Father Mathew: His Life and Times* (London: Cassell and Company, Limited, 1890), 23-24; Colm Kerrigan, *Father Mathew and the Irish Temperance Movement 1838-1849* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1992), 3.
- 4 Kerrigan, *Father Mathew*, 12.
- 5 Simon Potter, “Review of *The Eternal Paddy: Irish Identity and the British Press, 1798-1882*,” *Reviews in History* 501 (2006). <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/501> (accessed: June 9, 2014).
- 6 For more on representations of the Irish see Michael De Nie, *The Eternal Paddy: Irish identity and the British press, 1798-1882* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 25; David Nally, *Human Encumbrances: Political Violence and the Great Irish Famine* (Notre Dame, Indiana: Notre Dame University Press, 2011), 92 and Roy Foster, *Paddy and Mr Punch: Connections in Irish and English History* (London: Allen Lane, 1993), chapter 9.
- 7 James Kneale, “[The Place of Drink: Temperance and the Public, 1856-1914](#),” *Social and Cultural Geography* 2, no. 1 (2001): 43-59, 45.

- 8 Henry Yeomans, "[What Did the British Temperance Movement Accomplish? Attitudes to Alcohol, the Law and Moral Regulation](#)," *Sociology* 45, no. 1 (2011): 38-53, 42-43; Michael Roberts, *Making English Morals: Voluntary Association and Moral Reform in England, 1787-1886* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 117. Also see Alan Hunt, *Governing Morals: A Social History of Moral Regulation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
- 9 British Parliamentary Papers, *Report from the Select Committee on Inquiry into Drunkenness, 1834* (559) VIII, 315.
- 10 Christopher Cook, *Alcohol, Addiction and Christian Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 82; Lilian Shiman, *Crusade Against Drink in Victorian England* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, United Kingdom: Macmillan, 1988), 18.
- 11 The 1834 committee had recommended the establishment of parks, libraries and reading-rooms, though it was largely ignored or ridiculed at Westminster. See Brian Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians: The Temperance Question in England 1814-1872* (Keele, United Kingdom: Keele University Press, 1994), 106-108.
- 12 Yeomans, "What did the British Temperance Movement Accomplish?" 42-43.
- 13 Quinn, *Father Mathew's Crusade*, 52.
- 14 His Franciscan novitiate followed his withdrawal from Maynooth after hosting a party in his room. The resulting freedom from Maynooth's "nationalist orientation" may have shaped his clerical and ecumenical development. See Quinn, *Father Mathew's Crusade*, 35-6.
- 15 Katherine Tynan, *Father Mathew* (London: Macdonald and Evans, 1910), 28; Quinn, *Father Mathew's Crusade*, 58.
- 16 Paul Townend, *Father Mathew, Temperance and Irish Identity* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2002), 41.
- 17 Nally, *Human Encumbrances*, 58.
- 18 John Sheil, *Dr. Sheil's Historical Account of the Temperance Movement in Ireland* (Dublin: Samuel J. Machen, 1843), 5. Original emphasis.
- 19 Ibid. Quinn notes that in 1841 Mathew removed the reference to membership and later the clauses on medicinal or sacramental use, meaning people were pledging for life. See Quinn, *Father Mathew's Crusade*, 63.
- 20 Rev. James Birmingham concluded that the pledge bound people for only as long as their membership of the Society, which they could revoke on request. Rev. James Birmingham, *A Memoir of the Very Rev. Theobald Mathew, with an account of the rise and progress of temperance in Ireland* (Dublin: Milliken and Son, 1840), 81.
- 21 "(From the *Ulster Times*.) Our Holy Father the Pope Again," *Times*, January 16, 1840, 6. Priests were often connected with "superstitious notions," though the Halls argued Mathew could have done more to remove the association; Hall and Hall, *Ireland*, 43. *The Standard* reported claims that Mathew had performed upward of four hundred miracles, accusing him of "spiritual and secular fraud," *Leader, The Standard*, March 11, 1840, 2.
- 22 Alexander King, *The Might and the Right of the People. Letters on Popular Education, Temperance-Political Reform, &c.* (London: Ward and Company, 1843), 20.
- 23 Ibid., 28.
- 24 Ibid., 17. Original emphasis. McGraw and Whelan have argued that before O'Connell "Catholic culture was denied a public sphere; after O'Connell that was inconceivable"; Sean McGraw and Kevin Whelan, "[Daniel O'Connell in Comparative Perspective, 1800-50](#)," *Eire-Ireland* 40, nos. 1-2 (2005): 60-89, 74. For more on the Catholic Church before emancipation, see Emmet Larkin, *The Pastoral Role of the Roman Catholic Church in Pre-Famine Ireland, 1750-1850* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2006).

- 25 Kneale, "The Place of Drink," 45. Also see David Beckingham, "[Scale and the Moral Geographies of Victorian and Edwardian Child Protection](#)," *Journal of Historical Geography* 42 (2013): 140-151.
- 26 George Bretherton, "Against the Flowing Tide: Whiskey and Temperance in the Making of Modern Ireland," in *Drinking: Behaviour and Belief in Modern History*, eds. Susanna Barrows and Robin Room (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 147-164, 156; Townend, *Father Mathew*, 1. For a discussion of the numbers, see Diarmaid Ferriter, *A Nation of Extremes: The Pioneers in Twentieth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1999), 6.
- 27 Some police inspectors did report local connections between temperance and Repeal. See Kerrigan, *Father Mathew*, 124.
- 28 Elizabeth Malcolm, *'Ireland Sober, Ireland Free': Drink and Temperance in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1986), 144; Kerrigan, *Father Mathew*, 170.
- 29 "The Very Rev. Theobald Mathew at Naas," *Freeman's Journal*, August 17, 1840, 1.
- 30 Rev. William Wight, *A Word to People of Common Sense; Or, the Temperance Movement—The Public Press—Opium Eating—Father Mathew, and English Protestants*. By a Member of the University of Cambridge (London: Simpkin, Marshall and Co., 1846), 21.
- 31 James Vernon, *Politics and the People: A Study in English Political Culture, c. 1815-1867* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 225.
- 32 *Ibid.*, 79 and 164.
- 33 Adrian Bailey, David Harvey and Catherine Brace, "[Disciplining Youthful Methodist Bodies in Nineteenth-Century Cornwall](#)," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 97, no. 1 (2007): 142-157, 143.
- 34 John Maguire, *Father Mathew: A Biography* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Robert, & Green, 1863) 191. See "Ireland. The Peaceful Agitation," *Times*, October 3, 1842, 5.
- 35 Mark Billinge, "[A Time and Place for Everything: An Essay on Recreation, re-Creation and the Victorians](#)," *Journal of Historical Geography* 22, no. 4 (1996): 443-459, 443.
- 36 Kneale, "The Place of Drink," 45. Original emphasis. For more on the institutions and infrastructures of the public sphere see Geoff Eley, "Nations, Publics, and Political Cultures: Placing Habermas in the Nineteenth Century," *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1992), 288- 339, 291. For an account of the Catholic Church's attempts to create a "moral monopoly" through such a transformation, see Tom Inglis, *Moral Monopoly: The Rise and Fall of the Catholic Church in Ireland* (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 1998).
- 37 Charles Gavan Duffy, *My Life in Two Hemispheres. Volume I* (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1969[1898]), 66. Mathew would later provide a character reference at Gavan Duffy's trial. The Young Islander William Smith O'Brien also spoke in support of temperance. See Richard Davis, *Revolutionary Imperialist William Smith O'Brien: 1803-1864* (Dublin: The Lilliput Press, 1998), 146.
- 38 Bretherton, "Against the Flowing Tide," 150.
- 39 Townend, *Father Mathew*, 122. James Vernon makes a similar observation. See Vernon, *Politics and the People*, 237.
- 40 Roberts, *Morals*, 152.
- 41 Pamela Gilbert, *The Citizen's Body: Desire, Health and the Social in Victorian England* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2007), 8.
- 42 Stephen Legg and Michael Brown, "[Moral Regulation: Historical Geography and Scale](#)," *Journal of Historical Geography* 42, (2013): 134-139, 136. See Raúl Fornet-Betancourt, Helmut Becker, Alfredo Gomez-Müller and J.D. Gauthier, "[The Ethic of Care for the Self as a Practice](#)

- of Freedom: An Interview with Michel Foucault on January 20, 1984," *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 12, nos. 2-3 (1987): 112-131, 114.
- 43 John Quinn, *Father Mathew's Crusade: Temperance in Nineteenth-Century Ireland and America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002) 8. For more on temperance and loyalty see Matthew Allen, "Sectarianism, Respectability and Cultural Identity: The St. Patrick's Total Abstinence Society and Irish Catholic Temperance in mid-Nineteenth Century Sydney," *Journal of Religious History* 35, no. 3 (2011): 374-392, 392; Beckingham, "[The Irish Question and the Question of Drunkenness: Catholic Loyalty in Nineteenth-Century Liverpool](#)," *Irish Geography* 42, no. 2 (2009): 125-144.
- 44 Quinn, *Father Mathew's Crusade*, 8.
- 45 Mathew, *Father Mathew*, 69 and 71; Anonymous, *An accurate report of the proceedings of the Very Rev. Theobald Mathew, in Dublin, in the cause of temperance, when eighty thousand persons took the pledge. With the sermon preached by him in the Church of the Conception, Marlborough Street* (Dublin: Richard Grace, 1840), 40.
- 46 Justen Infinito, "[Ethical Self-Formation: A Look at the Later Foucault](#)," *Educational Theory* 53, no. 2 (2003): 155-171, 157. For a discussion of ethics see Barry Smart, "Foucault, Levinas and the Subject of Responsibility," in *The Later Foucault: Politics and Philosophy*, ed. Jeremy Moss (London: Sage, 1998), 78-92.
- 47 Tony Ballantyne, "Ireland, India and the Construction of the British Colonial Knowledge," in *Was Ireland A Colony? Economics, politics and culture in nineteenth-century Ireland*, ed. Terence McDonough (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2005), 145-161, 146 for a discussion of the imagination of the nation. Philip Howell, "[Afterword: Remapping the Terrain of Moral Regulation](#)," *Journal of Historical Geography* 42 (2013): 193-202, 195. Original emphasis. In some respects O'Connell's "oppositional nationalism," as David Lloyd terms it, needed to obscure alternative readings of the very forms that were held to provide a unifying identity. Lloyd profiles James Clarence Mangan, who declined to take Mathew's pledge apparently, according to Father C.P. Meehan, "because he doubted his ability to keep it"; more symbolically, this might be read as a rejection of respectability as that quality that constituted the nation. Lloyd examines how Mangan could nevertheless be recovered as an "ethical subject by identifying him with an aesthetic or political type." See David Lloyd, *Nationalism and Minor Literature: James Clarence Mangan and the Emergence of Irish Cultural Nationalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), x, 46-7.
- 48 "Teetotalism and Repeal," *Times*, April 15, 1841, 3.
- 49 S. Hubert Burke, *The Rise and Progress of Father Mathew's Temperance Mission* (London: S.W. Bleach, 1885), 4. Original emphasis. Also see Sean O'Faolain, *King of the Beggars: A Life of Daniel O'Connell* (Swords: Poolbeg Press, 1980[1938]), 297.
- 50 "Teetotalism and Repeal."
- 51 Leader, *Times*, April 21, 1841, 4.
- 52 Leader, "The Times-Teetotalism," *Freeman's Journal*, April 23, 1841, 2.
- 53 Maguire, *Father Mathew*, 231.
- 54 Speech at Lucan, June, 1842, cited in Burke, *The Rise and Progress*, 7-8; Rev. Patrick Rogers, *Father Theobald Mathew: Apostle of Temperance* (Dublin: Browne and Nolan Limited, 1943), 61.
- 55 "Grand Temperance Procession at Cork," *Freeman's Journal*, March 30, 1842, 3; Maguire, *Father Mathew*, 234-5, 237.
- 56 Cited in Tynan, *Father Mathew*, 87, and Townend, *Father Mathew*, 216.
- 57 Mathew, *Father Mathew*, 87.
- 58 Father Augustine, *Footprints of Father Theobald Mathew: Apostle of Temperance* (Dublin: M.H. Gill, 1947) 281.



- 59 Mathew frequently travelled in mail coaches. One anecdote records that he was delayed at Athy for five hours after local people demand he stop and take their pledges. See Stephen Gwynn, *Saints and Scholars* (London: Thornton Butterworth, Limited, 1929) 130. Maguire notes that protests at the "stopping of Her Majesty's Mail" in an English paper were brought to the attention of the coach operator, who promptly gave Mathew free use of his services. See Maguire, *Father Mathew*, 55.
- 60 "Great Northern Temperance Demonstration," *York Herald*, July 15, 1843, 6; Alex Tyrrell, "Preston Teetotal Movement," in *Alcohol and Temperance in Modern History: A Global Encyclopedia*, eds. Jack Blocker, Ian Tyrrell and David Fahey (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2003), 490-491.
- 61 "Father Mathew in England," *Metropolitan Temperance Intelligencer and Journal*, July 22, 1843, 225-7; "Father Mathew in England," *Tablet*, July 15, 1843, 12.
- 62 "Father Mathew in England," *Tablet*, July 15, 1843, 12. Baines had been inspired by developments in Bradford, where a society had been founded in 1830, and later helped establish one in Leeds. See Harrison, *The Drink Question*, 102.
- 63 "Father Mathew in England," *Metropolitan Temperance Intelligencer and Journal*, July 22, 1843, 225-7, 227. Original emphasis.
- 64 "Temperance Festival," *Liverpool Mercury*, July 7, 1843, 226 ; "Progress of Father Mathew," *Metropolitan Temperance Intelligencer and Journal*, July 29, 1843, 233.
- 65 "Local and General Intelligence," *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser*, July 22, 1843, 5.
- 66 "Father Mathew in Manchester and Liverpool," *Liverpool Mercury*, July 28, 1843, 252.
- 67 "Father Mathew in Manchester," *Manchester Guardian*, July 22, 1843, 6.
- 68 Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power," *Critical Inquiry* 8, no. 4 (1982): 777-795, 783.
- 69 "Arrival of Father Mathew in Liverpool," *Liverpool Mercury*, July 21, 1843, 242.
- 70 Letter dated 24 July 1843, cited in David Wilson, *Carlyle on Cromwell and Others (1837-48)* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Turner & Co., Ltd, 1925), 232.
- 71 Kerrigan, "Father Mathew and Teetotalism in London, 1843," *London Journal* 11, no. 2 (1985): 107-114, 107. See Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians*, 130, for more on "schisms."
- 72 For more on early disagreements, see Roberts, *Morals*, 150-1.
- 73 Jurgen Habermas, "Religion in the Public Sphere," *European Journal of Philosophy* 14, no. 1 (2006): 1-25, 3.
- 74 "The 'Times' and Father Mathew," *Tablet*, August 19, 1843, 521-2.
- 75 "Father Mathew," *English Churchman*, August 3, 1849, 491.
- 76 A Churchman, "Letters to the Editor. Father Mathew," *Cambridge Chronicle and Journal, and Huntingdonshire Gazette*, August 19, 1843, 2.
- 77 A Protestant, "Letters to the Editor. Father Mathew," *Cambridge Chronicle and Journal, and Huntingdonshire Gazette*, August 19, 1843, 2.
- 78 "Cambridge, August 28," *Bury and Norwich Post, and East Anglian*, August 30, 1843, 3.
- 79 "Father Mathew's Temperance Union," *Cambridge Independent Press and Huntingdon, Bedford & Peterborough Gazette*, September 9, 1843, 2.
- 80 "Father Mathew at Norwich," *Times*, September 9, 1843, 3; Augustine, *Footprints*, 304.
- 81 "Father Mathew and Dr. Wiseman at Birmingham," *Times*, September 13, 1843, 6; "Country News. The Temperance Movement," *Illustrated London News*, September 16, 1843, 183. Wiseman wrote to The Times to elaborate on this distinction. See Nicholas Wiseman, "Dr. Wiseman and Father Mathew. To the Editor of The Times," *Times*, September 16, 1843, 6.
- 82 "Father Mathew at Birmingham," *Metropolitan Temperance Intelligencer and Journal*, September 23, 1843, 300-302, 302.
- 83 Leader, *Times*, September 14, 1843, 4.

- 84 Augustine, *Footprints*, 323; Kerrigan, *Father Mathew*, 140.
- 85 Untitled, *Leeds Mercury*, July 8, 1842, 1; "Public Amusements," *Liverpool Mercury*, July 21, 1843, 237. For more on the impact of ticketing see Vernon, *Politics and the People*, 151.
- 86 Andy Croll has argued that the letters columns of local papers formed an important part in a kind of citizen-surveillance. Andy Croll, "[Street Disorder, Surveillance and Shame: Regulating Behaviour in the Public Spaces of the late Victorian British Town](#)," *Social History* 24, no. 3 (1999): 250-68.
- 87 Augustine, *Footprints*, 293; Mathew, *Father Mathew*, 85.
- 88 "Conclusion of Father Mathew's Labours in the Metropolis," *Metropolitan Temperance Intelligencer and Journal*, September 16, 1843, 289-296, 293.
- 89 "Father Mathew at Chelsea," *Morning Chronicle*, September 2, 1843, 4.
- 90 "Father Mathew in London," *Metropolitan Temperance Intelligencer and Journal*, August 5, 1843, 241-245; "Father Mathew at Regent's-Park," *Times*, August 12, 1843, 8.
- 91 Maguire, *Father Mathew*, 288.
- 92 "Continued Success of Father Mathew," *Metropolitan Temperance Intelligencer*, September 2, 1843, 273-274.
- 93 "Ireland," *Times*, August 17, 1843, 6-7, 7.
- 94 "Father Mathew in St. Giles's," *Times*, August 21, 1843, 6; "Ireland," *Times*, August 23, 1843, 5.
- 95 "Father Mathew in St. Giles's," *Freeman's Journal*, August 24, 1843, 3.
- 96 "Loyal National Repeal Association," *Freeman's Journal*, August 24, 1843, 4; "Father Mathew at Greenwich," *Times*, August 22, 1843, 6.
- 97 "Father Mathew in Marylebone on Saturday," *Morning Chronicle*, August 14, 1843, 6.
- 98 Howell, "Afterword," 198.
- 99 "Father Mathew in Marylebone on Saturday."
- 100 Mathew was reportedly interrupted by representatives of the licensed trade at Bermondsey, where an attempt was made to sabotage the supports for his platform. See "Father Mathew at Bermondsey—Outrage on the Apostle and Disgraceful Proceedings," *Morning Chronicle*, August 26, 1843, 2; Kerrigan, "Father Mathew and teetotalism in London," 111.
- 101 Kerrigan, "Father Mathew and Teetotalism in London," 112. The ambivalence of the hierarchy mirrored a general reluctance among Irish bishops to endorse Mathew's mission. See Rogers, *Father Theobald Mathew*, 150.
- 102 Ryan Dye, "Catholic Protectionism or Irish Nationalism? Religion and Politics in Liverpool, 1829-1845," *Journal of British Studies* 40, no. 3 (2001): 357-90, 386; Beckingham, "The Irish Question," 128.
- 103 Peter Doyle, *Mitres and Missions in Lancashire: The Roman Catholic Diocese of Liverpool 1850-2000* (Liverpool: Bluecoat Press, 2005), 42.
- 104 "Father Mathew in the Rural Districts," *Times*, August 18, 1843, 6.
- 105 "Father Mathew in Kennington-Common," *Times*, August 9, 1843, 7.
- 106 "The Temperance Movement in London," *Metropolitan Temperance Intelligencer and Journal*, September 9, 281-288.
- 107 Ina Ferris, *The Romantic National Tale and the Question of Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 1.
- 108 *Ibid.*, 269. My emphasis.
- 109 *Ibid.*, 157.
- 110 *Ibid.*, 125. Frank Mathew suggests that the Friar was anxious that those who followed O'Connell might be fired by a "war-spirit."

- 111 Samuel Carter Hall, *A Letter to Irish Temperance Societies, Concerning the Present State of Ireland, and its Connexion with England* (London: J. How, 1843) 1, 7, 15.
- 112 For more on the geography of repeal see Thomas Bartlett, *Ireland: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 276, though Bartlett references Mathew only in the context of an 1870s concern with respectability (see p. 301).
- 113 Townend, *Father Mathew*, 231.
- 114 Mathew's letters reveal a providentialist reading of the famine. See Quinn, *Father Mathew's Crusade*, 135.
- 115 Townend, *Father Mathew*, 268-9.
- 116 "The Temperance Movement in London," *Metropolitan Temperance Intelligencer and Journal*, September 9, 1843, 281-88, 283 and 286.
- 117 Habermas's recent emphasis on the role of religion as a source of values in a contemporary "postsecular" public sphere can be used to redress the neglect of religion and spirituality. Eduardo Mendieta and Jonathan Vanantwerpen, "Introduction: The Power of Religion in the Public Sphere," in *The Power of Religion in the Public Sphere: Judith Butler, Jürgen Habermas, Charles Taylor, Cornel West*, eds. Eduardo Mendieta and Jonathan Vanantwerpen (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 1-14, 4.

# The Great Famine in Colonial Context: Public Reaction and Responses in Britain before the “Black ’47”

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**ABSTRACT:** Since the early 1990s the study of the Great Famine of 1845-52 has been subject to a critical and creative renewal, with historians and historical geographers alike producing detailed, nuanced, and theoretically rich understandings of the causes and consequences of the blight made famine. Central to this renewal has been the focus on the policy and relief reactions of the British government, the direct colonial controllers of Irish policy. We also now know, thanks to the pioneering work of Christine Kinealy, much about government-sanctioned and regulated charitable relief efforts in operation from early 1847. What has not been subject to such detailed scrutiny is the reaction and responses of the wider British public before 1847, the period when the blight first appeared and changing British governmental responses acted to turn acute scarcity into absolute biological need. In so doing, it shows that initially public reactions were confused and complex, tending towards sympathy and indifference at once, informed by a deep-seated public understanding—themselves shaped by wider political discourses—that Ireland was a problem. Moreover, the major popular political movements of the Anti-Corn Law League and Chartism opportunistically exploited the emergent famine for their own campaigning ends. This is not to claim, however, that popular reactions were altogether unfeeling, the fear and threat of scarcity and famine in England and Scotland acting to foster shared concerns with the poor Irish victims of uncaring absentee landlords. When it became apparent that after the failure of the 1846 potato harvest and with the withdrawal of direct government relief, people were beginning to die of want and from famine-related diseases, non-government sponsored subscriptions to relieve the famine Irish were readily and extensively entered into.

[Mrs Forster of Arranmore had written to England] till she was ashamed to tire their generosity again, not once had she been refused from the churches there.<sup>1</sup>

The good faith of the empire should be staked to prevent the scenes that have occurred in the west.<sup>2</sup>

The Great Famine casts a shadow over the culture and politics of Ireland and its peoples so totally that it belongs to small group of events in global history that can truly be claimed as marking a profound fissure in time and space.<sup>3</sup> As is well-rehearsed, if not absolutely without controversy, between 1846 and 1852 scarcity-made-famine robbed Ireland of one million of its sons and daughters through starvation and conditions associated with chronic malnourishment, and ultimately led to two million others fleeing destitution (and possible death) by seeking a life overseas.<sup>4</sup> The shadow of this disgraceful episode is, unsurprisingly, also cast on the telling of Ireland’s “national story,” taking a central part in both general survey histories and in famine



historiography's dominant position in Irish social and political history and historical geography. This has not always been the case. As Emily Mark-Fitzgerald has recently noted, it was not until the 1990s that famine memorials increased in number from a "small handful" to more than 100.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, as Christine Kinealy has suggested, it was not until the 1990s that the famine assumed a vital place in the teaching of Irish history in schools and universities. Teaching of the famine had been important before the 1930s, but thereafter revisionist histories in their attempt to forge new, self-confident, post-reactionary nationalist identities "played down" the famine as a watershed in the making of modern Ireland.<sup>6</sup>

From the late 1980s, the historiography of the Great Famine has witnessed an unprecedented flowering. Through the pioneering acts of post-revisionist synthesis of, amongst others, Margaret Crawford, Peter Gray, and Christine Kinealy, to the more quantitative, economic history approaches of Joel Mokyr and Cormac O'Grada, to more recent culturally and politically sophisticated studies by Tim Pat Coogan, Emily Mark-Fitzgerald and David Nally, and in John Crowley, William J. Smyth and Mike Murphy's *Atlas*, the famine has truly assumed a new centrality in Irish history.<sup>7</sup> One aspect of post-revisionist accounts that is truly novel—in comparison to both pre-1930s historiography and later revisionist accounts—is the emphasis placed on relief schemes, highlighting the ways in which the giving of "relief" was in and of itself constitutive of turning scarcity into a devastating famine. Conversely, this post-revisionist literature has also shown how humanitarian impulses acted to check further devastation. Indeed, the giving of relief in both the form of formal, statutory poor relief through the Irish Poor Law of 1838 and through public donations have become a critical theme in post-revisionist accounts, perhaps best reflected in Kinealy's 2013 monograph *Charity and the Great Hunger in Ireland: the Kindness of Strangers*.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, as James Donnelly notes, "ever since the Great Famine people have debated the culpability of the British government in the mass deaths which marked and defined that horrendous social catastrophe."<sup>9</sup> The response of the governments of Prime Ministers Sir Robert Peel and Lord John Russell has been subjected to intense critical scrutiny. What has not figured in such studies, though, is the British public's reaction to the famine. The one exception is Donnelly's examination of British public opinion of the June 1847 Poor Law Amendment Act, and this exclusively through the lens of the anti-relief *Times* and the *Illustrated London News*. Similarly, Kinealy's recent study of relief practices and giving has analyzed in detail the workings of the British Relief Association of Extreme Distress in the Remote Parishes of Ireland and Scotland (BRA). It is important to note though that the BRA was established in January 1847 at the behest of Prime Minister Lord John Russell and assistant secretary to the British Treasury, Sir Charles Trevelyan, and publicly backed in two letters of support by Queen Victoria. This was no spontaneous public outpouring of sympathy and support. While many working and middle-class communities and individuals did generously support the BRA, in relation to the British public reaction Kinealy's account focuses more on the actions of prominent individuals and businesses and groups supporting the mission of the BRA.<sup>10</sup>

This paper builds upon these critical studies in asking what the British public response and reaction to the famine was before the founding of the BRA. In so doing, it widens Donnelly's study of British public opinion to encompass a broader range of sources of public record, considers the responses of the Anti-Corn Law League and the Chartist movement, and asks whether non-state sanctioned public subscriptions were raised before the "official" call.<sup>11</sup> It does so, initially, by placing into perspective British official and state-sanctioned relief efforts and responses. Before that, it is necessary to place the making of the famine into Ireland's wider colonial and geopathogenic context.

### Blight made famine: the British colonial context

In commercial affairs, as well as in political, Ireland is going backwards. Her population in latter years has doubled; so have her resources—so have her agricultural capabilities—but the blight of English legislation is over it all.<sup>12</sup>

The potato harvest of 1845 promised to be prodigious. As the *Banner of Ulster* put it at the beginning of August, “this crop—the staple of Ireland—is more abundant this season than it has been for several years past.”<sup>13</sup> Plants were healthy and there was “scarcely” any blight “in the North.” So bountiful would be the crop—the heaviest in years even—that prices were expected to fall.<sup>14</sup> A month later and in the full swing of harvest, the Belfast press was not only reporting a better than expected grain harvest in Antrim but also that the late unseasonal showers had in no way damaged the potatoes.<sup>15</sup> The *Dublin Evening Post* went further: “[T]here never, perhaps, was a finer growth of Potatoes, which are selling at about half the price of this time last year.”<sup>16</sup> The blessing of Divine Providence, so reckoned the *Limerick Chronicle*, had protected the crops and allowed a glut of new potatoes to be sold cheaply at Limerick market in late August.<sup>17</sup>

Reports from elsewhere in north-western Europe were in stark contrast. In early August a strange phenomenon was witnessed in the potato fields around Nimeguen and Heusden in the south Netherlands: potatoes dying in the course of one night.<sup>18</sup> Once infected, all potato plants in the field withered and dried up in a few hours. Similar reports were soon also being made in Belgium, northern France and around the Rhine. More-or-less concurrently, reports of an unusual blight also issued from the Weald of Kent and Sussex in England.<sup>19</sup> In late July, a localized “partial blight” had been noticed, but by August 12, 1845 it had spread through East Sussex and Kent leading to predictions that there would be a “failure, to a great extent” in the crop.<sup>20</sup> “Complaints” that potatoes had turned black and were found to be of no use whatsoever were soon termed “very general.”<sup>21</sup> A week later, the spread was said to be rapid, with cases confirmed on the east coast in Essex and Suffolk and westwards into Hampshire and Surrey.<sup>22</sup> By the end of August reports confirmed that the blight had spread as far west as the area around Truro and Redruth in Cornwall. So extensive was the damage—and so all consuming was critical commentary in the provincial and horticultural press—that speculation started as to the cause of the blight (variably the poor weather of the “season” was to blame, murrain had spread from cattle, or a pathogen was spread in the air) and as to ways in which the “rot” could be cured.<sup>23</sup>

In Ireland these reports were noted with, as Kinealy puts it, “curiosity rather than alarm.”<sup>24</sup> On August 29, 1845 the *Cork Examiner*, on reporting the “most serious apprehensions” in southern England, could still reassure its readers that the north of England was as yet free from the blight and there was “not the least symptom of its approach” anywhere in Ireland.<sup>25</sup> This was not strictly true, for in late August the blight had been observed at the Botanical Gardens in Glasnevin, Dublin.<sup>26</sup> While this was not initially made public, and similar observations were not published “lest after all the suspected visitation should only prove imaginary,”<sup>27</sup> on September 6, 1845 both the *Dublin Evening Post* and the *Waterford Freeman* announced that Irish potatoes had now been killed by the blight.<sup>28</sup> As the editor of the latter publication grimly reported, the spread of the blight was already “considerable” and the likely consequences “very serious.” Or as the *Cork Examiner* put it four days later, “our worst fears are likely to be realised”; and soon, notwithstanding that markets continued to be plentifully supplied and prices low, it and other newspapers were warning of the likelihood of famine.<sup>29</sup>

While subject to revision and counter-revision, an effect of the potato blight—the water—and air-borne pathogen *phytophthora infestans* as it was later identified—was a famine with a mortality rate, according to Amartya Sen, higher than for any other recorded famine in human

history, with only the Ukrainian famine of the 1930s comparable in the history of modern Europe.<sup>30</sup> Between 1846 (there were no famine deaths in 1845) and 1852 one million people perished, with some two million others leaving Ireland, many of these individuals also dying on their journeys or soon after arriving in America, Canada and England.<sup>31</sup> But, as historians of the famine have noted, crop failures do not themselves make famines. Social, cultural, legal, and political systems do. In the context of 1840s Ireland, it was arguably the interplay between three interrelated colonial systems that turned scarcity into famine.

First, the landowning system meant that the vast majority of the land was owned by a small group of largely absentee landlords who through land law and customary practices enjoyed almost total power over their tenants. Most tenants were the landless laborers, holding one-year contracts with no incentive to invest in their small plots, while at the same time needing to maximize the return from their rental planted for the short-term only, invariably in the form of the prolific potato. British acknowledgements that the system was essentially unfair as well as fears for the sustainability of agricultural subdivision, given recent rapid population growth (from 6.5 million in 1841 to a probable 8 million in 1845), led to the Devon Commission being established by Peel in 1843 to investigate the occupation of land. Reporting in early 1845, the Commission's investigations were neither as extensive nor were its recommendations for land reform as wide-reaching as had been hoped.<sup>32</sup>

Second, British mercantile policy was both in a state of ideological flux and geopolitical confusion. By the time the potato blight started to wreak its havoc in the fields of Ireland, the dominant issue in British politics was reform of the so-called Corn Laws, a complex and much-amended protectionist system comprising a sliding scale of import duties for corn designed to protect English farmers from the full effects of foreign competition. An anathema to both industrialists who believed that the corn laws acted to "artificially" inflate the cost of food, and hence the wages they paid to their workforce thereby reducing their international competitiveness, and to the apostles of Adam Smith, the balance of members of the House of Commons was gradually shifting in favor of repeal. This was in no small part due to the innovative and effective campaigns of the Manchester-based Anti-Corn Law League. Amongst their number was Peel, converted to the free trade cause in the 1820s but leading a Tory party and government of landowners ideologically and self-interestedly against repeal. The position in relation to Ireland—at once part of the union and yet commercially subject to different values and rules—was messy, provisional and decidedly partial. When, seemingly against the parliamentary odds, repeal passed through the Houses of Commons and Lords on May 12, 1846, it was applied in relation to Ireland in decidedly doctrinaire ways.<sup>33</sup>

Relatedly, and finally, Ireland's status as a colonial "problem" while also part of the Union was reflected in confused and often contradictory policy impulses and prescriptions. As noted, the issue of land reform never achieved wholehearted support from either Whigs or Tories, both often finding their governments reliant on support from Irish landowning MPs. Even the early evidence of famine conditions in late 1845 and early 1846 proved no spur to shift from the characteristic hesitancy to actually "meddle" with Irish land policy. As Robert Shipkey has put it, Peel's 1841-46 administration initially followed the by-then customary "do nothing" policy in relation to Ireland. From 1843, the position of Peel's government shifted from policy inactivity to "conciliation," this evidenced in the setting up of the Devon Commission and Peel's unequivocal public support for Catholic education in the form of significantly increasing the grant to the Maynooth seminary in 1845.<sup>34</sup>

It is possible to overlay conciliation though, for neither policy met Irish demands nor worked politically for Peel, a situation reminiscent of the political aftermath of his Irish "concession" in the form of Catholic Emancipation in 1828-9. For the majority of British

(elected) politicians, Ireland remained a problem. One hundred years of scarcity and famine and seemingly endemic agrarian protest against hardnosed absentee landlords and their capitalist grazier tenants producing grain, dairy and meat for the British market, had left successive Westminster governments frustrated at their inability to control the unruly colony. Not even the bitter repression of the United Irishmen between 1798 and 1803 and the concurrent dissolution of the Irish parliament and the passing of the Act of Union between Great Britain and Ireland acted to check the perception that Ireland remained not only a problem but *apart*. The resurgence of Irish nationalism in the early 1840s through the Young Ireland “movement” (arguably the most coherent, non-sectarian assertion of Ireland’s right to self-government against British colonial self-interest) under the charismatic direction of John Blake Dillon and Thomas Davis, also represented a major nationalist threat to the future of the Union. Contra the form of Irish nationalism peddled by Daniel O’Connell, it also represented a threat to the interests of landowners.<sup>35</sup>

None of this meant that the British state had given up on Ireland. Social reform, political control and the cultural embrace with the Union remained the holy grail, the solution (always) one piece of legislation away. As Gray has noted, “[t]he transformation of Irish society was to follow directly from Corn Law repeal,” this just the latest in a long time of attempts to engineer colonial cohesion.<sup>36</sup> Nally has recently suggested that not only was the British state complicit in trying to reform Ireland, to bring it under *its* control, but it also actively used Ireland as a test bed for new techniques of governing, new forms of governmentality. By positioning Ireland as both a form of property and as a problem, it was also possible to assert the authority to regulate and classify the Irish body politic and the bodies of Irish men and women, with the population disaggregated according to their use, “conduct and perceived threat to social order.”<sup>37</sup> The primary object of political strategy of this new approach then was the regulation of “the basic biological features of the human species,” and under its prescriptions scarcity and famine were permissible as the possible means to provoke desired political and social outcomes.<sup>38</sup> As Nally, drawing on the work of David Keen, puts it, “famines now ha[d] functions as well as causes.”<sup>39</sup> With this in mind, the following section details the response of the British government to the onset of the scarcity and the (engineering of the) famine.

### British state responses and relief, 1845-47

As noted, the immediate reaction of the Westminster government to the sign of extensive potato blight in Ireland was to do nothing. Initially the policy was not without *some* justification, for Home Secretary Sir James Graham was correct in his assessment that, while blighted, the crop was abundant.<sup>40</sup> Past shortages had not led to famines, hence there was hope—however naïve and misplaced—that Irish cottiers would be able to survive the winter without government intervention. Peel was also deeply skeptical of Irish communications in the early months after the identification of the blight, believing that, as in the past as he saw it, Irish magistrates were “calling wolf.”<sup>41</sup> Pleas by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Lord Heytesbury, on October 27, 1845 that to “tranquillise the public mind and diminish the panic” the government ought to offer some, as Shipkey has put it, “show of action” were ignored. The revived Mansion House Committee (formed in Dublin in 1821 to raise subscriptions to assist distressed areas) also made a plea to Peel through Heytesbury that exports should be banned, distilleries prohibited from using grain, public granaries founded, and a program of public works set up to employ those out of work. This too received short shrift. Missives from similar organisations in Belfast, Cork and Londonderry were likewise passed off.<sup>42</sup>

In short, the initial response was thereby predicated on a combination of past prejudices and experiences, Peel’s ideological adherence to the self-righting powers of political economy, combined with what he perceived to be a lack of decisive evidence. To this end, two factors are



critical. Governmental refusal to ban exports was founded on two understandings. First, that if merchants could find an overseas market for diseased potatoes then they should be allowed to export them and bring cash into the economy, which, in turn, would be used to import nutritious foodstuffs. Second, food exports were normally limited to the main cash crop, wheat ("corn"), dairy products and livestock. While potatoes dominated the diet of the vast majority of the population – Irish laboring families not just eating potatoes out of necessity but also supposedly preferring them to other foodstuffs – the acreage devoted to wheat far exceeded that given to potatoes. Wheat was a cash crop, a cash crop that supported Irish landlords, merchants and British bread-dependant consumers. Hence allowing wheat exports, especially after what had been a fine harvest, would be of no consequence.<sup>43</sup> Or so the theory went. This would later have public consequences as the theories of political economy were more doggedly and ideologically followed by Russell's Whig administration than Peel's Tories. By 1849 as, George Bernstein has put it, "the British were sick of the whole business and were reluctant to spend any more of their money on a people who would not help themselves."<sup>44</sup> Non-interventionism was thought to be "justified" by the political economy policy prescription of *laissez-faire* and was supported by the "famine mythology" that nothing could be done, that the deaths were acts of God.

Towards gathering evidence as to the actuality of scarcity and the severity of the blight, in October 1845 Peel instituted a Scientific Commission and accordingly sent two scientific advisors to Dublin. Their reading of the evidence in eventuality was proved wrong, the claim that five-sixths of the crop would be lost thankfully being unduly pessimistic. Their claim was, however, at least in part responsible for a shift in policy.<sup>45</sup> Realizing the potential severity of the situation, in November 1845 it was agreed that a new approach was to be implemented from the following spring, when it was thought food supplies would in all probability become perilously short. Mirroring government responses to the 1816 crisis and building upon relief offered by the 118 operable poor law workhouses, Peel instituted a program of public works to employ those out of work, the secret purchase of £100,000 of Indian corn (maize) from the United States, and the creation of a relief commission.<sup>46</sup> The impact of these policies is hard to precisely discern, but it is worth noting that the one hundred or so local relief committees (most being based in the southwest) had to apply to the Dublin-based Relief Commission for Indian corn, and, if successful, were to *sell* it at market prices, later changed to cost price and in cases of extreme distress *gratis*. The Relief Commission was also slow to act, something not helped by the constant and resented interference of Trevelyan, the permanent secretary to the Treasury under both Peel and Russell's governments. Slowness as a result of monitoring was also a problem that afflicted the special relief department of the Board of Public Works administering public work programs.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, food depots supplying the local committees were not to open until May, notwithstanding that localized shortages were felt from March. Food riots followed in Carrick-on-Suir, Clonmel and Tipperary targeting merchants and forestallers charging "famine" prices for wheat. Notwithstanding their being put down by the military and provoking strong condemnation in parliament, they did lead to some depots being opened earlier than had otherwise been planned.<sup>48</sup> The local committees also had some success in raising financial support through local subscriptions, the £98,000 collected in this way supplemented by a grant of £65,914 from the Lord Lieutenant.<sup>49</sup> While the importation of Indian corn was not meant as a direct substitute for potatoes – Peel's intention was that it would help to keep the price of food down and deter hoarding by speculators – it did act as a substitute. Albeit one popularly loathed as evidenced in the popular satirical name given to maize, "Peel's Brimstone."<sup>50</sup>

Together, such measures (notwithstanding the myriad problems including administrative frauds on the public works that were widely publicized in the British press) were effective in preventing famine deaths, though badly stored and prepared Indian corn did lead to widespread

illness. Against this “success,” it has been claimed that a consensus emerged in British public and political opinion. The efforts and expenses of the Westminster government had allowed, so the argument went, Irish landlords to shirk from their duty. Peel’s package was therefore just another sticking plaster against the pressing need to reform Ireland. Moreover, the giving of relief had supposedly acted to depress local stimuli to action.<sup>51</sup>

The blight reappeared in July 1846 and by mid September the whole country was affected. Coinciding with a British political crisis and the fall of Peel’s government in the fallout after the passing of the Importation Act on May 16 that repealed the Corn Laws, relief policy initially remained unaltered. Besides, Peel’s policy of importing Indian corn was scheduled to end on August 15 and as a temporary expedient was never intended to continue after that date, the government now acting only as the supplier of last resort. Indeed, only a handful of depots remained open, and these in the worst affected areas of the west.<sup>52</sup> Yet against mounting evidence of likely chronic scarcity, the policy adopted by Russell’s incoming (minority) Whig administration proved even more doctrinaire and inflexible than Peel’s government. Considerable power now rested in the hands of Trevelyan and Charles Wood at the Treasury. Working from a belief that Irish taxpayers as opposed to the Treasury should be liable for relief costs, Russell’s government not only decided *not* to renew the import of Indian corn but also determined that public works should be funded through Poor Law taxation. Wages on public works were also to be set below market rates, though such were the delays created by Treasury-imposed checks before works could start and so late were payments often made that what little potential positive effects of the scheme were further checked.<sup>53</sup>

Despite this and that in some places individuals refused to work on the schemes such was the pay and the conditions of work – the Treasury in such cases decreeing that the particular project would stop until all “outrages” had stopped – the demand for public work exceeded supply in the exceptionally harsh winter. By January 1847 570,000 men were so employed, a figure that rose to 734,000 in March, thus at its peak one in three men and roughly two million people were supported by the public works program.<sup>54</sup> But against this level of support, in January 1847 the British government resolved to end the program of public works and by the autumn make the poor law responsible for the maintenance of all individuals, a system of public soup kitchens to meet needs in the interim. To this end, a 20 percent reduction in public works was imposed on March 20, 1847, with a sliding scale of further cuts following, this notwithstanding that public soup kitchens in many places were not yet operative. In this way, so Russell’s government desired, ultimately the needs of the suffering Irish would be met by Irish taxpayers, the market for foodstuffs left to operate without state intervention, and Irish society and the economy would be transformed. That winter, with the ports continuing to export huge amounts of corn and livestock to Britain and even America, the Irish constabulary estimated that 400,000 individuals died through want of food.<sup>55</sup> As the Irish radical newspaper *The Nation* put it, the abandonment of public works was a “murderous absurdity,” evidence of the British government’s “utter apathy to the tremendous responsibility with which they are trifling.”<sup>56</sup>

Against the slow withdrawal of the *direct* relief efforts of the British state, charity was not only encouraged but directly supported by Russell’s government. As noted, the landlord-dominated local relief committees had by August 1846 raised £98,000 in donations, but this represented a fraction of what was being spent, let alone that needed to prevent a humanitarian disaster.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, in Britain, so Peel had believed, there would be little private sympathy, and thus no efforts were made to stimulate charity. If the Whigs too were slow to recognise the possibilities of harnessing charitable support, this soon changed. Through the influence of the Indian Relief Fund – which raised funds for Ireland in India and Ceylon – and pleas from Anglican clergy in Ireland, Trevelyan began to conceive that charity could provide an important

safety net, which would allow the government to, as Gray puts it, “adhere rigidly to its relief rules.”<sup>58</sup> Evangelical morality could thus save political economy. Providing Irish landowners set the example, all would follow out of a sense of brotherly and sisterly compassion.

The British Association for the Relief of Extreme Distress in the Remote Parishes of Ireland and Scotland was founded in the City of London in January 1847. The Association was under the immediate lead of chair Thomas Baring, of the self-named bank that had earlier purchased the Indian corn on behalf of Peel’s government, but had been founded at Trevelyan and Russell’s instigation.<sup>59</sup> The (publicly stated) aim was to aid the poor “who are beyond the reach of government” with food, clothes and fuel.<sup>60</sup> Advice was also taken as to the best means to proceed in Ireland from the most important pre-existing relief organisation, the Central Relief Committee, itself founded in Dublin in November 1846 by the Society of Friends and active in raising money from their members in both Ireland and England.<sup>61</sup> In support of this new British charitable initiative, the Queen issued an official letter in January 1847 calling for collections in every parish in the land, this supported by sermons in parish churches. The effect, as has been well documented, was immediate and emphatic. Personal donations from Queen Victoria of £2,000 – her support doubled due to the inclusion of Scotland in the scheme – and her ministers (Russell giving £300) made giving to Irish charity both an act of religious duty *and* fashionable.<sup>62</sup> By the time the BRA finished its activities in the summer of 1848 it had raised £470,041 1s. 2d., of which £391,700 17s. 8d. was expended in Ireland.<sup>63</sup> Over fifteen thousand donations had been made, including from British corporations, universities, the British army, as well as from overseas, mostly from British colonies.<sup>64</sup> Relief, it was resolved, was to be given in food rather than money, though in some areas this rule could not be adhered to as no food was available to purchase. In the spring of 1847 seed oats were also distributed in the west in a further departure from stated policy. Local committees were created, food depots founded, and agents and even the Royal Navy engaged to help determine need and distribute relief. Most of its money was expended that spring and summer of 1847, thereafter on the introduction of the Poor Law Extension Act in August its activities were confined to the most distressed unions, continuing until July 1848 when its funds were finally exhausted.<sup>65</sup>

### **British public responses and relief, 1845-47**

Given the ravages of *phytophthora infestans* in England and Scotland, initial commentary in the British press about the effects of the blight in Ireland were quick to draw parallels but also to forewarn of singularly devastating consequences given the reliance of Irish cottiers on the potato. As a letter to the *Cambridge Independent Press* suggested, the on-going public scandal over the fact that inmates of the Andover Union workhouse in Hampshire had been reduced to supplementing their potato-heavy diet by gnawing green bones was a ready warning of the reliance on the potato. England might be “far removed at present from the horrors of [...] the depopulation of famine,” but this served as a warning.<sup>66</sup> More directly, as the *Wiltshire Independent* reported, “Ireland is threatened with famine, not merely that periodical dearth between the potato-crops every year which puts a third part of the people into a state of destitution, but a failure of the potato-crop itself.”<sup>67</sup> Detailing cases of crop failure throughout Ireland, the piece concluded by predicting that as “[t]he consequences of such a failure of the staple food in Ireland are terrible to contemplate [...]. Government will of course take some steps.”<sup>68</sup>

With the notable exception of the Chartist press – of which more below – anti-Tory newspapers invariably suggested the solution to the likely crisis was to repeal the Corn Laws and throw open the ports. Even some parts of the provincial and agrarian Tory press suggested that some limited, targeted opening of the Irish ports to allow relief for the sufferers of Ireland was laudable. As the editor of the *Ipswich Journal* put it: “[I]mportation made under the proper

regulations [...] will excite no regret, or cause complaints from the agricultural interest."<sup>69</sup> The temporary repeal of the Corn Laws would however offer *no* "relief" to the Irish poor. The paper of the Hampshire landowners, likewise believed it was "an absurdity" opening the Irish ports for the import of corn because those in need "cannot afford to purchase it."<sup>70</sup> Instead, relief would come from "the [charitable] benevolence of the people of England."<sup>71</sup>

The loudest voices though were those clamouring to open the ports as a prelude to (or part of an immediate) Corn Law repeal. Richard Cobden, co-founder and chief propagandist of the Anti-Corn Law League (ACCL), was quick in the autumn of 1845 to offer free trade as the solution to the failure of the potato crop, "starvation staring in the face" of the people of the "unhappy sister island."<sup>72</sup> Such commentaries, not least his speech given at the Great League Meeting at Manchester on October 28, 1845, were widely publicized and Cobden's argument and language adopted in the editorials and published letters of the pro-Corn Law repeal press. A speaker at a "great free trade meeting" at Taunton in late December even went as far as to claim that campaigning for the repeal of the Corn Laws was a "noble struggle" for the good it would be in opening up the Irish ports to avoid "all their horrors."<sup>73</sup> Speakers at a further Manchester meeting in December again spoke in emotive terms about the likely sufferings of the Irish poor and (tellingly) on the negative impact the blight had made on Manchester-Irish trade.<sup>74</sup> A £50,000 subscription was duly raised—not to relieve the Irish but to support the ACCL's campaign. Similarly at a public meeting in Sheffield to consider the repeal of the Corn Laws, in the main speech Alderman Dunn played on the emotional solidarities of the largely working-class audience by, when mentioning the state of the poor in Ireland, proclaiming "he could never do so without feelings that he could scarcely describe."<sup>75</sup> While the first speech of a public meeting at Leeds on December 3, 1845—postponed from noon to 7pm so as to enable the "working classes" to attend—opened by making reference to the state of the hungry in Ireland and England, it asserted that the poor in both countries the victims of "class" legislation.<sup>76</sup> This belief was 'confirmed' by comments made by the Dukes of Richmond and Norfolk at a meeting of Sussex agriculturalists at Steyning, near Brighton, in early December. Richmond, improbably, suggested that laborers to 'uphold the flags of Nelson and Wellington' and import their own potatoes from Portugal, while Norfolk, explosively, recommended that the Irish eat their diseased potatoes with curry powder. Norfolk's comments quickly gained notoriety throughout Britain and Ireland, giving further credence to the emergent popular belief that the landed classes of both islands little understood or cared for the hungry working poor. The situation was especially pressing given that, as the Exeter press saw it, Ireland was 'bordering upon a state of absolute famine' with the 'same evil' also threatening England.<sup>77</sup>

Blight in Ireland was thus read as a warning for England's domestic situation—note, reporting on the possible effects of the blight in Scotland figured little in the initial English commentary—and mobilized as evidential ammunition in the increasingly vituperative battle between those for and against the repeal of the Corn Laws.<sup>78</sup> No less vitriol-laden was the relationship between the ACCL and the Chartist leadership, a dynamic which can be read as having impacted upon Chartist responses to the blight and emergent famine in Ireland.<sup>79</sup> While the ACCL swiftly and decisively attached themselves to the issue, prominent Chartists were more equivocal. Chartism had a loose grip on Ireland, only flourishing in Dublin (and then in partnership with the Irish Universal Suffrage Association) between 1841 and 1844. Thereafter, the most obvious connection was through Irish migrants in Britain subscribing to the Charter and assuming positions of power in the movement, notably founder and editor of the Leeds-based mouthpiece of the movement the *Northern Star* Feargus O'Connor, and advocate of the Chartist Land Plan Bronterre O'Brien. Moreover, in matters Irish there was considerable division between prominent Chartists, with dissent over O'Connor's prominent use of the *Northern Star* to espouse the repeal of the Union.<sup>80</sup>



The *Northern Star* first reported the existence of the blight in the Channel Island and south and west England on August 30, 1845, but it was not until November 1 that the paper first alluded to the possibility of a famine in Ireland and England.<sup>81</sup> This, and subsequent reporting, were used to attack both the ACCL—accused of using the “crisis” to advance the interests of “capital” against those of “labor”—and Peel’s mercantile and colonial policy. O’Connor also used the opportunity of a speech in London on November 5, 1845—his first in Britain that autumn—to mobilize the blight as evidence of the need for land reform and support for the Chartist Land Plan.<sup>82</sup> Beyond opportunism to push particular agendas, the early Chartist response was best summed up in an open letter from O’Connor to “the Imperial Chartists” published in the *Northern Star*: “the excitement of free trade, the militia, war, famine, and the Queen’s speech, instead of diverting your attention from that all-important subject [land reform], will rather lead you to a consideration of it as the means of making you independent of all casualties, whims, caprices, and class legislation.”<sup>83</sup> Even as late as the May Day Chartist rally of 1847 when the full enormity of the effects of famine in Ireland were evident, the response of O’Connor and other prominent Chartists was to espouse the criticality of the Land Plan as a solution to the Malthusian check.<sup>84</sup>

This is not to say that ACCL and Chartist commentary, speechifying and reporting were devoid of genuine sympathy towards the Irish poor. Indeed, what united pro- and anti-Corn Law repealers and Chartists alike was an apparent genuine fear for the human consequences of blight and government inaction. From early 1846, almost without exception each issue of the *Northern Star* made some reference to the effects of the blight (both in Ireland and elsewhere) and the actual and likely effects on the Irish poor. Yet outside of reprinting news from the Irish press, such reports invariably were used to make a broader political point. Thus on February 14, 1846, a report on the appearance in “many districts” of “pestilence” (“ever the attendant of famine”) juxtaposed “the assaults of the hungry” with “sleek and fat horses [...] a bloated police force, a gorged soldiery, bursting war horses.”<sup>85</sup> At the same time Peel was accused by O’Connor of a similar opportunism in using the pretext of the social dislocations of scarcity and the rise in agrarian protest to introduce to Parliament in May 1846 the Irish Coercion Bill. Ultimately the bill failed and with it brought down Peel’s government.<sup>86</sup>

Nor were other public journals entirely without feeling in their reporting, but, as with Chartist commentary, at least before October 1846 reports on the state of rural Ireland were often used to offer a wider critique of British mercantile, agrarian and colonial policy. Thus the Church and State Toryism of the *Salisbury Journal* berated Peel for the state of Ireland:

If any thing were wanting to demonstrate Sir Robert Peel’s incompetence to carry on her Majesty’s Government in Ireland, it might be found in the present state of that kingdom. [With] rampant and furious [...] Orangemen in Ulster, and O’Connell and his followers [...] howl[ing] for repeal of the Union in the south, Ireland was out of control. Against this, [f]amine, with all its attendant horrors, glares at them [Peel’s cabinet].<sup>87</sup>

The solution, however, was not “English charity, Saxon benevolence,” as in the past, but instead the Irish Poor Law and the “proprietors of the soil [...] exposed to the indignation and disgust of the British public,” who themselves had grown rich “by exactions from these poor creatures.”<sup>88</sup> From a different political perspective, Peel was also subject to the scorn of the *Fife Herald* in late October for having sent only the two scientific commissioners to Ireland to investigate the “disease” in the potato crop.<sup>89</sup> Less obviously wracked by ideological feeling was a commentary in the *Leeds Times* on 8 November 1846 bemoaning that against famine—“already a pressing and palpable thing”—the poor were suffering as “Ireland is being drained of her best

food to supply the wants of England and Scotland."<sup>90</sup> At the same time, Scottish potatoes were also still being exported to the Nordic countries and Baltic states. Through such trading *England* was again averting famine, but Ireland was still subject to the structured "perennial famine" which kept a third of its population in a state of constant hunger and starvation and Scotland likely subject to like disaster.<sup>91</sup> Or as the *Cambridge Independent Press* put it, "it is an extraordinary fact, that while the people of the south of Ireland are threatened with famine, the quays of Limerick and Waterford are crowded with vessels taking grain and other provisions for England."<sup>92</sup> As Peter Gurney has suggested, in such ways the 'politics of provisions' remained center of the British political stage in late 1845, the example of Ireland a warning to England.<sup>93</sup>

Such early reports betray a degree of confusion as to the actual and likely impact of the blight on the people of Ireland and as to the best prescription to aid the problem. This was not even divided on political (or Corn Law repeal) lines. For every Tory press assertion that this was Ireland's problem, came commentaries, such as that in the Tory *Hampshire Advertiser*, that the people of England had a charitable duty to help.<sup>94</sup> The only explicit *call* to raise subscriptions to aid those suffering from the early effects of the blight I have uncovered though related not to the Irish poor but instead the hungry of Scotland.<sup>95</sup>

During the winter of 1845-6 this might have been a function of reports acting to reduce the humanitarian impulse when suggesting that the initial fears as to the universality and severity of the blight had not been realized. This and the eventual government relief policies evidently impacted public willingness to collect money to support Ireland. Nor should we underestimate the potential impact of the ACLL campaign to raise £250,000 through subscriptions, not least given that this campaigning was strongest in those places with the large migrant Irish communities and thus also where metropole-colony solidarities were strongest.<sup>96</sup> In the first half of 1846 other dynamics militated against the raising of public subscriptions. The reporting of abuses of state-funded public work schemes was, as noted, widespread, as were reports of agrarian protest and landlord evictions. Collectively such reports were taken by much of the press as evidence of purblind landlords and violent mendicant peasants, of a country beyond the help of further charitable giving.<sup>97</sup> This was best exemplified by Home Secretary Graham placing before Parliament on June 8, 1846 a bill by the name of "Protection of Life (Ireland)," concerned not with famine relief measures but instead the means to put down "agrarian insurrection."<sup>98</sup> And this followed parliamentary utterances to the tune that past English subscriptions had simply found their way directly into the pockets of Irish landlords, their exported corn being purchased in England by subscriptions and shipped back to Ireland. As Peel had stated in the House of Commons after the Easter recess: "I affirm that the responsibility rests rather upon those who are resident on the spot, and upon those who, not being resident, have a still moral obligation to transmit their subscriptions through their resident brethren."<sup>99</sup> The duty was resolutely not that of the British people.

The depth of feeling on issue was best summed up by an editorial of the independent, politically liberal *Bristol Mercury* in April 1846. The British government, it noted, had intervened in providing Indian corn but could not, so it had professed, undertake to feed the Irish people, this after all being the duty of Irish landlords. What stores it had left were being held, for it foresaw "a far worse time coming," and this retention was thus, as the paper asserted, the "humane course."<sup>100</sup> Irish landlords, by way of contrast, had raised only a "few paltry hundreds" through subscriptions, even though the mechanisms to collect funds were in place via Daniel O'Connell's Union "repeal rent" fund.<sup>101</sup> England, it thundered, was "'looked [to] for everything – and blamed for everything."<sup>102</sup>

Beyond the emotive rhetoric and the misinformation regarding indigenous relief-raising, the fact that such reports even appeared in the politically liberal press acted powerfully to

undermine British public action. This was explicitly, if sheepishly, acknowledged in reports of the “munificent contribution” from India for the relief of the Irish poor.<sup>103</sup> As the *Morning Post* related: “Whatever distrust may have been entertained at home at the representation made by the ‘Mansion-House Committee’ on the subject of Irish distress, there can be no second opinion as to the noble generosity which has prompted the remittance of no less a sum than three thousand pounds for its relief.”<sup>104</sup> A “respectable meeting” had been held in Calcutta on January 2, 1846, a general committee formed and various members of the Irish-note, not British-nobility, clergy, and academy invited to become trustees of the “Bengal Subscription” and responsible for the distribution of the funds.<sup>105</sup> By January 21, 1846, the subscription amounted to 39,000 rupees, with a further subscription started in Madras with hopes of the like happening in Bombay. As Kinealy notes, subscribers were supposed to be limited to British and Irish settlers, though some Indians also offered their support, the Calcutta Committee (a.k.a. the Irish Relief Fund and the Indian Relief Fund) expressing their wish that even the smallest donations were welcome.<sup>106</sup> At a distance, if not at home, the British *did* raise relief funds by subscription before the prompt of the government-backed scheme.

The tenor of British public reactions changed markedly in late summer when the potato crop was found to be an almost total failure. “The people of this country,” warned the editorial in the *London Standard* on September 3, 1846, “must prepare for exertions to save millions of our fellow subjects.”<sup>107</sup> While stopping short of advocating public subscriptions—though the subscription of 1822 had been a “glorious monument to British generosity”—the columns of the paper in the ensuing days marked a notable shift in tone.<sup>108</sup> By the beginning of October the absolute certainty of a humanitarian disaster prompted a shift in British popular opinion and action. Well-attended public meetings to consider what means to adopt to alleviate the suffering of the Irish poor were held in London and entered into subscriptions.<sup>109</sup> Concurrently, the National Club (founded in London the previous June with the aim of upholding “the Protestant Principles of the Constitution, and for Raising the Moral and Social Condition of the People” in Britain and Ireland) unilaterally acted. It resolved in “this frightful emergency” to act on “the impulse of their own feelings and on the suggestions of many” to open a general subscription to support both the Irish and the poor in the Scottish Highlands.<sup>110</sup> A large committee of noblemen and MPs was duly formed to determine upon the distribution of subscribed funds, and to provide against “imposition” from claimants. This news prompted the *Standard* to change its line on subscriptions: “they who feel and rejoice in ‘the blessedness of giving, may now indulge in their glorious disposition with a full assurance that they can do nothing but good.’”<sup>111</sup> By mid November the National Club had already raised over £900.<sup>112</sup>

This and the aforementioned other early October London subscriptions were by no means the only such funds raised before the foundation of the BRA in January 1847. While London was to remain the central focus for British relief efforts—something acknowledged by a deputation from the Cork Relief Committee being dispatched to London in November to solicit subscriptions—other local subscriptions were also launched.<sup>113</sup> While the archive is no doubt defective in recording such ad-hoc, localized collections, it is striking that those schemes reported figured heavily in Lancashire and Yorkshire, counties with large migrant Irish populations and strong cultural and trade links with Ireland. Bristol, another large maritime city with a large Irish population and a strong Irish trade, followed suit in raising a subscription in early January 1847.<sup>114</sup> Concurrently, in December the Quakers also entered into a national subscription in Britain to aid the Central Committee in Dublin in establishing soup kitchens. By mid December it was reported that £20,000 had been raised, of which £1,000 alone came from the “good givers” of Leeds.<sup>115</sup>

## Conclusion

In many ways initial British public reactions to the famine mirrored those of the Peel's Tory administration and those of the wider Imperial Parliament. Blight, and its likely attendant effects, was at once a domestic *and* a colonial issue. It was something that united Britain and Ireland, for the *fear* of famine was not something confined to Ireland but something sensed in England and absolutely felt in the Scottish Highlands. The demotic experience of the "Hungry 40s" in Britain mediated the understanding of the plight of more distant kin.<sup>116</sup> But while shared, lived experiences and an emergent laboring cosmopolitanism (as given expression in much Chartist writing) underpinned empathy for the hungry Irish in some places, it is important to note that there continued to be an entrenched culture of xenophobia.<sup>117</sup> Attacks on Irish migrant workers, for instance, remained an important part of working culture into the 1840s.<sup>118</sup>

In the case of the major centers of Irish migrant populations, the experience of Irish hunger was not shared at a distance but something shared immediately and in place. At the same time against this Unionist interpretation, the wider political rhetoric was not that this was a British problem, a problem of the united countries of the Union. Rather, it was represented as a colonial problem, a consequence of the structural problems with the Irish economy and society. Together these dynamics meant that the undoubted deep human feeling for the sufferings of the Irish poor evident in the public response was tempered by the belief that, at best, this was either another false alarm or, at worst, this was something the Irish had brought upon themselves, a belief later given scriptural frame in the "providential" reading of famine deaths. Typified by the responses of both the ACCL and Chartist campaigners, the problem was therefore, as Gray and Nally amongst others have suggested, an opportunity to restructure Ireland. To change Ireland from a problem colony to an effective and profitable part of Britain.<sup>119</sup> This reading is given further depth by the fact that whereas before the autumn of 1846 popular subscriptions for the relief of the hungry Irish were not raised in Britain, they *were* raised in other British colonies. Such were the bonds of solidarity.

In addition, it is important to underline that beyond hardened positions, when the evidential realities of "pestilence and famine" in Ireland became irrefutable, the response was unequivocal. Against the brutality of the policy response of Russell's government—and before the Treasury-sanctioned launch of the BRA campaign—subscriptions for the relief of the famine Irish *were* raised in Britain. Beyond the coordinated activities of the National Club though, it is impossible to get at the depth of this subscription movement by virtue of its ad-hoc, uncoordinated nature, and as such we will in all probability never know how universal or important it was.<sup>120</sup> Yet the existence alone of such pre-BRA local subscriptions is telling. It speaks directly to the existence of a humanitarian concern motivated not by government, royal speeches, popular political movements, religious foundations, or even charities, but something moved by a sense of colonial responsibility and human solidarity. It is important to note though that this corrective assertion of empathy does not act to diminish the importance of the popular fervor manipulated by the BRA subscription. Critically, nor does it reduce the human impact of the 'compassion fatigue' that followed the BRA, the discourse of the British press and political debate shifting from sympathy to asserting that resurgent Irish Nationalism and rural rebellion was evidence of "monstrous ingratitude."<sup>121</sup> Rather, it reminds us that there was not one British response but many, changing both over time, and between different places and groups.

As noted, the literature on this devastating, politically framed famine has since the early 1990s developed at pace, addressing gaps in our knowledge, asking new questions of the archive, and showing a more nuanced, sophisticated understanding of the catastrophe. Historical geographers in particular have contributed massively to these new understandings, visualizing



the effects of the famine and placing the events of 1845-9 into a wider theoretical and international context.<sup>122</sup> In this spirit, this paper has shown that further nuances and complexities can be fruitfully examined from a historical-geographical perspective. Beyond showing that the British popular reaction went beyond politically manipulated and controlled, this paper also demonstrates the need to look not only at the wider colonial landscape but also at the contours of reaction and response in the metropole itself.

## NOTES

- 1 Maureen Murphy, ed., *Annals of the Famine in Ireland: Asenath Nicholson* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1998), 77. Nicholson's account was originally published in London in 1850 and in New York the following year.
- 2 Letter to the editor of the *Freeman's Journal*, 8 January 1847; quoted in Cormac Ó Gráda, *Black '47 and Beyond: The Great Irish Famine in History, Economy and Memory* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999), 77.
- 3 For an important recent study of the memorialization of the famine, see Emily Mark-Fitzgerald, *Commemorating the Irish Famine: Memory and the Monument* (Liverpool, United Kingdom: Liverpool University Press, 2013).
- 4 For a recent geographical analysis of the impact of the Great Famine on Irish demographics, see A. Stewart Fotheringham, Mary Kelly, and Martin Charlton, "[The Demographic Impacts of the Irish famine: Towards a Greater Geographical Understanding](#)," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 38, no. 2 (2013): 221-37.
- 5 Mark-Fitzgerald, *Commemorating the Irish Famine*, 2.
- 6 Christine Kinealy, *This Great Calamity: The Irish Famine 1845-52* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2006), xviii-xix.
- 7 Margaret Crawford, *Famine: The Irish Experience, 900-1900* (Edinburgh, United Kingdom: John Donald Publishing 1989); Peter Gray, *The Irish Famine* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1995); Gray, *Famine, Land and Politics: British Government and Irish Society 1843-1850* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1999); Kinealy, *Death-Dealing Famine: The Great Hunger in Ireland* (London: Pluto Press, 1997); Kinealy, *The Great Famine in Ireland: Impact, Ideology and Rebellion* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002); Kinealy, *This Great Calamity: Charity and the Great Hunger in Ireland: the Kindness of Strangers* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013); Joel Mokyr, *Why Ireland Starved: A Quantitative and Analytical History of the Irish Economy, 1800-1850* second edition (London: Routledge, 2005); Ó Gráda, *The Great Irish Famine* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Ó Gráda, *Black '47 and Beyond*; Tim Pat Coogan, *The Famine Plot: England's Role in Ireland's Greatest Tragedy* (Basingstoke, United Kingdom: Palgrave, 2013); Mark-Fitzgerald, *Commemorating the Irish Famine*; David Nally, *Human Encumbrances: Political Violence and the Great Irish Famine* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010); John Crowley, William J. Smyth, Mike Murphy, eds., *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2012).
- 8 Kinealy, *Charity and the Great Hunger in Ireland*.
- 9 James Donnelly, "'Irish Property Must Pay for Irish Poverty': British Public Opinion and the Great Irish Famine," in Chris Morash and Richard Hayes, eds., *"Fearful Realities": New Perspectives on the Famine* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1996), 60-76.
- 10 Donnelly, "Irish Property Must Pay for Irish Poverty"; Kinealy, *Charity and the Great Hunger in Ireland*, chs. 8 and 9. Also of note is David Nally's study of Thomas Carlyle's writings on his travels through Ireland from September 1846, though this is not a study of public reactions *per se*: "['Eternity's Commissioner': Thomas Carlyle, the Great Irish Famine and the geopolitics of travel](#)," *Journal of Historical Geography* 32, no. 3 (2006): 313-335.

- 11 Donnelly, "Irish Property Must Pay for Irish Poverty."
- 12 *Cork Examiner*, 20 January 1845, 2.
- 13 Report from the *Banner of Ulster* reprinted in *Freeman's Journal*, 6 August 1845, 4.
- 14 *Leeds Times*, 9 August 1845, 4.
- 15 *Belfast News-Letter*, 2 September 1845, 4.
- 16 *Dublin Evening Post*; quoted in *Belfast News-Letter*, 2 September 1845, 4.
- 17 *Limerick Chronicle*; quoted in *Belfast News-Letter*, 2 September 1845, 4.
- 18 *Cork Examiner*, 20 August 1845, 4.
- 19 *Sussex Advertiser*, 12 August 1845, 2.
- 20 *Morning Post*, 15 August 1845, 2; including report from *Kentish Observer*.
- 21 *London Standard*, 19 August 1845, 4; including report from *Dover Chronicle*. "Some 'failures' of the potato harvest had been noticed in Devon in late July, though whether this was due to the same blight seems improbable," *Sherborne Mercury*, 2 August 1845, 4.
- 22 *Sussex Advertiser*, 19 August 1845, 2; *Morning Chronicle*, 20 August 1845, 6; *Cork Examiner*, 22 August 1845, 2 (including letter to the editor from Body and Co., Mark Lane, London).
- 23 *Cork Examiner*, 27 August 1845, 4; including report from the *Gardener's Chronicle*; *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 29 August, 3; *Sherborne Mercury*, 30 August 1845, 4.
- 24 Kinealy, *This Great Calamity*, 31.
- 25 *Cork Examiner*, 29 August 1845, 3.
- 26 E. Charles Nelson, *The Cause of the Calamity: Potato Blight in Ireland 1845-7, and the Role of the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin* (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1995): 5. As Nuala Johnson notes, under the lead of head gardener David Moore, Glasnevin became a major center of study into the blight, though the various experiments into prevention and cures ultimately had no positive effect: *Nature Displaced, Nature Displayed: Order and Beauty in Botanical Gardens* (London: IB Tauris, 2011), 60-63.
- 27 *Cork Examiner*, 10 September 1845, 3.
- 28 *Dublin Evening Post*, 6 September 1845, quoted in Austin Bourke, "The Use of the Potato Crop in Pre-Famine Ireland," *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland* 21 (1968): 72-96, 72; *Waterford Freeman*, 6 September 1845, quoted in *Cork Examiner*, 10 September 1845, 3.
- 29 *Cork Examiner*, 10 September 1845, 3; *Cork Examiner* 15 September 1845, 2; *Freeman's Journal*, 17 September 1845, 1. See also: Bourke, "The Use of the Potato Crop."
- 30 For references on revision and counter-revision, see note 7 above. Amartya Sen, *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 1990 [1981]).
- 31 Five thousand famine refugees alone were buried at Grosse-Île in Quebec in 1847, this being the largest famine gravesite outside of Ireland: Gilbert Tucker, "[The Famine Immigration to Canada, 1847](#)," *American Historical Review*, 36, no. 3 (1931): 533-49. For an excellent study of the public health implications of the arrival of the "famine Irish" in Liverpool, see Gerry Kearns and Paul Laxton, "Ethnic Groups as Public Health Hazards: the Famine Irish in Liverpool and Lazaretto Politics," in Esteban Rodríguez-Ocaña, ed., *The Politics of the Healthy Life: An International Perspective* (Sheffield, United Kingdom: EAHMH Publications, 2003): 13-40.
- 32 On the structure of Irish landholding and its agricultural and social effects, see Robert C. Shipkey, *Robert Peel's Irish Policy: 1812-1846* (New York: Garland, 1987): 472-477; Gray, *Famine, Land and Politics*, *passim*.
- 33 Paul A. Pickering and Alex Tyrrell, *The People's Bread: A History of the Anti-Corn Law League* (Leicester, United Kingdom: Leicester University Press, 2000).

- 34 Shipkey, *Robert Peel's Irish Policy*, 468, 361.
- 35 On the aftermath of the United Irishmen's 1798 rebellion, see James Patterson's excellent *In The Wake of the Great Rebellion. Republicanism, Agrarianism and Banditry in Ireland after 1798* (Manchester, United Kingdom: Manchester University Press, 2008). For the Young Ireland "movement," see Richard Davis, *The Young Ireland Movement* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1988); Gerry Kearns, "Time and Some Citizenship: Nationalism and Thomas Davis," *Bullán: An Irish Studies Review* 5, no. 2 (2001): 23-54
- 36 Gray, *Famine, Land and Politics*, 119.
- 37 Nally, "[The Biopolitics of Food Provisioning](#)," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 36, no. 1 (2011): 37-53, 40.
- 38 Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France 1977-1978* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 1.
- 39 Nally, "The Biopolitics of Food Provisioning," 40. For David Keen's conception: *The Benefits of Famine: A Political Economy of Famine and Relief in Southwestern Sudan, 1983-1989* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994).
- 40 British Library, Add Mss. 40451, fo. 286, Sir James Graham to Sir Robert Peel, 18 September 1845.
- 41 Shipkey, *Peel's Irish Policy*, 468-9.
- 42 Ibid., 470; Kinealy, *A Death-Dealing Famine*, 56.
- 43 Iain McLean and Camilla Bustani, "[Irish Potatoes and British Politics: Interests, Ideology, Heresthetic and the Repeal of the Corn Laws](#)," *Political Studies* 47, no. 2 (1999): 817-839. Kinealy, *A Death-Dealing Famine*, 49, 60.
- 44 George Bernstein, "['Liberals, the Irish Famine and the Role of the State'](#)," *Irish Historical Studies*, 29, no. 116 (1995): 513-536, 536.
- 45 Kinealy, *A Death-Dealing Famine*, 53-56. A further survey was carried out by Irish constabulary in March 1846. The blight was found to have had the worst impact in Armagh, Clare, Kilkenny, Louth, Monaghan, and Waterford where losses were in excess of two fifths of the crop.
- 46 Ibid., 56-57; Kinealy, *Charity and the Great Hunger in Ireland*, 18-23. On the state of the Irish Poor Law see: Peter Gray, *The Making of the Irish Poor Law, 1815-43* (Manchester, United Kingdom: Manchester University Press, 2009). It is important to note that *initially* import duties on Indian corn were not respite, for, in the words of Home Secretary Graham, "if we opened the ports to maize duty-free, most popular and irresistible arguments present themselves why flour and oatmeal, the staple of the food of man, should not be restricted in its supply by artificial means, while Heaven has withheld from an entire people its accustomed sustenance [...]. Can these duties, once remitted by Act of Parliament, be ever again reimposed?" Graham, to Peel, 13 October 1845, in Charles Stuart Parker, ed., *Life and Letters of Sir James Graham, Second Baronet of Netherby* (London: John Murray, 1907), 115.
- 47 The best study of the administration of the public works during the famine remains Arthur Griffiths, "[The Irish Board of Works during the Famine Years](#)," *Historical Journal* 13, no. 4 (1970): 634-652.
- 48 Gray, *Famine, Land and Politics*, 120; Kinealy, *A Death-Dealing Famine*, 61-63.
- 49 Instructions to the Committees of Relief Districts, extracted from Minutes of the Proceedings of the Commissioners appointed in reference to the apprehended scarcity, British Parliamentary Papers 1846, vol. 37 [171].
- 50 Kinealy, *A Death-Dealing Famine*, 62, 64.
- 51 Ibid., 63-4.
- 52 Gray, *Famine, Land and Politics*, pp.252-3; Kinealy, *A Death Dealing Famine*, 77.

- 53 Poor Employment Act, 9 and 10 Victoria (1846), c.107; Kinealy, *A Death Dealing Famine*, 67, 71-72, 73. On the contested role and impact of Trevelyan, see Robin Haines, *Charles Trevelyan and the Great Irish Famine* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004).
- 54 Kinealy, *This Great Calamity*, 90-106. For a detailed analysis of the numbers employed in public works, and the variation by region, see: *Ibid.*, 363-5.
- 55 *Times*, 12 March 1847, 6; Kinealy, *A Death Dealing Famine*, 74-75, 79-80.
- 56 *The Nation*, 27 March 1847, cited in Kinealy, *A Death Dealing Famine*, 75.
- 57 But as Peter Gray has asserted, despite such efforts they still came in for considerable criticism in the British media: *Famine, Land and Politics*, 132.
- 58 Indian Relief Fund, *Distress in Ireland: Report of the Trustees of the Indian Relief Fund...* (Dublin: J. Browne, 1847); Gray, *Famine, Land and Politics*, 257.
- 59 Correspondence Relating to Measures for Relief of Distress in Ireland, July 1846 - January 1847, British Parliamentary Papers 1847, vol. 51 [761]. On Baring's earlier involvement see: Kinealy, *Charity and the Great Hunger in Ireland*, 22-23
- 60 Murphy (ed.) *Annals of the Famine in Ireland*, n.34, 208.
- 61 Kinealy, *Charity and the Great Hunger in Ireland*, 3 63-83; Murphy, ed., *Annals of the Famine in Ireland*, 46-7, 207 (n. 30).
- 62 Gray, *Famine, Land and Politics*, 257-258; Kinealy, *Charity and the Great Hunger in Ireland*, 195-208, 219-220.
- 63 *Ibid.*, 192.
- 64 British Association Minute Book, National Library of Dublin, MS2022. For analysis of the donations see: Kinealy, *Charity and the Great Hunger in Ireland*, ch.9.
- 65 *Ibid.*, 185-189.
- 66 *Cambridge Independent Press*, 18 October 1845, 4.
- 67 *Wiltshire Independent*, 23 October 1845, 6.
- 68 Loc. cit.
- 69 *Ipswich Journal*, 25 October 1845, 2.
- 70 *Hampshire Advertiser*, 1 November 1845, 4.
- 71 Loc. cit.
- 72 *Morning Post*, 30 October 1845, 2.
- 73 *Taunton Courier, and Western Advertiser*, 24 December 1845, 6-7.
- 74 *Leeds Times*, 27 December 1845, 6.
- 75 *Sheffield Independent*, 6 December 1845, 8.
- 76 *Bradford Observer*, 4 December 1845, 4-5; *Morning Post*, 10 December 1845, 5-6.
- 77 *Western Times*, 8 November 1845, 2-3. On the Anti-Corn Law League's campaigning, see Pickering and Tyrrell, *The People's Bread*, esp. chapters 2 and 8.
- 78 As Charles Withers notes, though, policy responses and migratory consequences between the famines in Ireland and Scotland were similar: "[Destitution and Migration: Labour Mobility and Relief from Famine in Highland Scotland 1836-1850](#)," *Journal of Historical Geography* 14, no. 2 (1988): 128-150.
- 79 This fractious, complex relationship was perhaps best typified by the fact that in the ACCL's hometown of Manchester it hired "'Irish thugs'" to protect the League Platform and disrupt Chartist platforms: Janette Martin, "'Popular Political Oratory and Itinerant Lecturing in Yorkshire and the North East in the Age of Chartism, c 1837-1860'" (unpublished PhD thesis, University of York, United Kingdom, 2010), 57.
- 80 The outstanding recent study of Chartism is Malcolm Chase's *Chartism: A New History* (Manchester, United Kingdom: Manchester University Press, 2007). For an analysis of the work of Irish Chartists in England, see Roger Swift, "[Thomas Carlyle, Chartism, and The Irish in Early Victorian England](#)," *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 29, no. 1 (2001): 67-83.



- 81 *Northern Star*, 30 August 1845, 15; *Northern Star*, 1 November 1845, esp. 21.
- 82 *Northern Star*, 15 November 1845, 12.
- 83 *Northern Star*, 10 January, 4; *Northern Star*, 24 January 1846, 1.
- 84 Chase, *Chartism*, 271. The idea that there was insufficient land in Ireland to support the level of population in the mid 1840s has been absolutely refuted; see Louis Cullen, "[Irish History Without the Potato](#)," *Past & Present* 40 (1968): 72-83.
- 85 *Northern Star*, 14 February 1846, 5.
- 86 Shipkey, *Peel's Irish Policy*, 321.
- 87 *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*, 4 October 1845, 2.
- 88 *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*, 25 October 1845, 2.
- 89 *Fife Herald*, 28 October 1845, 2-3.
- 90 *Leeds Times*, 8 November 1845, 4.
- 91 Loc. cit.
- 92 *Cambridge Independent Press*, 29 November 1845, 8.
- 93 Peter J. Gurney, "'[Rejoicing in Potatoes](#)': The Politics of Consumption in England during the 'Hungry Forties,'" *Past & Present*, 203, no. 1 (2009): 99-136, 131.
- 94 *Hampshire Advertiser*, 1 November 1845, 4.
- 95 *Hereford Journal*, 26 November 1845, 3.
- 96 On the geography of Irish migrant settlement in Britain see: Donald MacRaild, *The Irish Diaspora in Britain, 1750-1939* (Basingstoke, United Kingdom: Palgrave, 2011), ch. 2.
- 97 Kinealy, *A Death-Dealing Famine*, 63.
- 98 *Hansard*, House of Commons Debate, 8 June 1846, vol. 87 cc. 129-94.
- 99 *Hansard*, House of Commons Debate, 24 April 1846, vol. 85 cc. 980-1022. For further reporting not detailed in *Hansard*, see *Bradford Observer*, 23 April 1846, 3-4. An exception to this rhetoric was George Bankes, Tory landowner and MP for the "family seat" at Wareham in Dorset. During the debate in the Commons on 8 May 1846 on the Corn Importation Bill, Bankes, an ardent supporter of the Corn Laws, stated that the "distress" in Ireland ought be supported by "public subscriptions and grants from the Exchequer" as opposed to "aggravated by the sacrifice of one of the great interest of the country": *Hansard*, House of Commons Debate, 8 May 1846, vol. 86 cc. 226-99. The direct quotation comes from the Parliamentary report in *Liverpool Mercury*, 15 May 1846, 2.
- 100 *Bristol Mercury*, 25 April 1846, 5.
- 101 Loc. cit.
- 102 Loc. cit.
- 103 *Morning Post*, 10 April 1846, 3.
- 104 Loc. cit.
- 105 *Morning Post*, 10 April 1846, 3; Indian Relief Fund, *Distress in Ireland*. Also see: Gray, *Famine, Land and Politics*, 257.
- 106 Kinealy, *Charity and the Great Hunger in Ireland*, 42-4. A subscription was also raised amongst the "European and Native" residents of Kandy, Ceylon/Sri Lanka: *Freeman's Journal*, 2 June 1846, 2.
- 107 *Standard*, 3 September 1846, 2.
- 108 *Standard*, 15 September 1846, 2.
- 109 *Morning Post*, 5 October 1846, 7.
- 110 *Morning Post*, 12 October 1846, 1.
- 111 *Standard*, 17 October 1846, 2.

- 112 *Standard*, 13 November 1846, 1-2.
- 113 *Freeman's Journal*, 20 November 1846, 4. The surviving administrative records of the National Club are held at the Bodleian Library, Oxford: Dep. b. 235-40, c. 682-4, d. 754-7.
- 114 For instance see reports of schemes in: *Hull Packet*, 23 October 1846, 8; *Hull Packet*, 25 December 1846, 5; *York Herald*, 24 October 1846, 7; *Standard*, 28 December 1846, 4 (regarding a meeting at Liverpool to raise a general subscription); *Leeds Mercury*, 2 January 1847, 4.
- 115 *Leeds Mercury*, 19 December 1846, 5.
- 116 On the popular experience of the "Hungry 40s" in England see: Gurney, "Rejoicing in potatoes."
- 117 The best articulation of these geographies of working cosmopolitanism appears in the ongoing work of David Featherstone. For his most detailed exposition, see *Solidarity: Hidden Histories and Geographies of Internationalism* (London: Zed Books, 2012), esp. ch.3.
- 118 MacRaid, *The Irish Diaspora*, pp.163-7; Louise Miskell, "Reassessing the Anti-Irish Riot: Popular Protest and the Irish in South Wales, c. 1826-1882," in Paul O'Leary, ed., *Irish Migrants in Modern Wales* (Liverpool, United Kingdom: Liverpool University Press, 2004), 101-118. On the culture of working xenophobia in rural England see: Keith D.M. Snell, "[The Culture of Local Xenophobia](#)," *Social History* 28, no. 1 (2003): 1-30.
- 119 Gray, *Famine, Land and Politics*; Nally, *Human Encumbrances*, esp. chs 4 and 6.
- 120 One possibility is the systematic analysis of the Dublin-based Relief Commission's surviving papers held at the National Archives of Ireland, but given that the Commission was formally stood down in August 1846 and not re-constituted until February 1847, this source does not offer a systematic survey.
- 121 On the idea of compassion fatigue and ingratitude, see Paul Bew, *Ireland: The Politics of Enmity 1789-2006* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2007), 210; Kinealy, *A Death-Dealing Famine*, 13, 118; Kearns and Laxton, "Ethnic Groups as Public Health Hazards," 31. The phrase "monstrous ingratitude" was first used in a report in the *Times*, 22 September 1847, 4.
- 122 The outstanding recent contributions are Nally, *Human Encumbrances*; and Crowley, Smyth and Murphy, *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine*.

# **“Up to the Sun and Down to the Centre:” The Utopian Moment in Anticolonial Nationalism**

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**ABSTRACT:** The ideology and practice of James Fintan Lalor is examined as a geographical imagination in the service of anticolonial nationalism. The utopian and forward-looking aspects of nationalism have not received as much attention as the retrospective emphasis upon the restoration of past glories. Yet in anticolonial nationalism, the question of what an independent state could achieve incites a utopian moment and links nationalism to a more universalist discourse concerning justice.

## **Anticolonial nationalism and young Ireland**

In *Under Three Flags: Anarchism and the Anti-Colonial Imagination*, Benedict Anderson explored the ways that anticolonial struggle produces intellectual insights that anticipate a utopian future.<sup>1</sup> In developing their criticisms of the social and economic disabilities required by colonial rule, anticolonial theorists must imagine ways that social, economic and political life might be better ordered. One implication of Anderson’s analysis, according to Amrith and Sluga, is that the United Nations “would have been unthinkable without the intellectual labor of Asian radical nationalists, who appropriated elements of European thought but transcended the racial exclusions inherent within them.”<sup>2</sup> Not all anticolonial thought is this creative, and on occasion it amounts to little more than a passionate wish to expel the colonial power. Furthermore, the anticolonial imagination is also fed by the utopianism that animates other political struggles such as those around class, political representation, and freedom of expression. Nevertheless, some anticolonial thought is clearly emancipatory in its own right. Robert Young found among anticolonial theorists, such as Franz Fanon, some of the earliest and most trenchant of attacks upon the grand narratives of the Rise of the West and upon the racist imaginaries that sustain the arrogance of colonial rule.<sup>3</sup> The American revolutionaries of the eighteenth century rallied around the slogan, “No taxation without representation,” and although they claimed to be doing little more than asserting their rights as free-born British subjects, they were, argued Grant Dorfman, proposing a new basis for government that could find no legal answer under British rule, colonial or otherwise: “The implausibility of their case doomed all efforts to gain redress within the system and drove events towards their ultimate impasse.”<sup>4</sup> The rights they wanted to assert could be realized only under a new sovereign dispensation. The justifications for the fight against colonialism can thus project a radically new society.

In 1994, launching the journal, *Nations and Nationalism*, Anthony Smith suggested that: “Perhaps the central question in our understanding of nationalism is the role of the past in the creation of the present.”<sup>5</sup> National ideologies often have a historicist hue and this may explain why the utopian and progressive elements of nationalism receive comparatively little attention and why scholars, such as Smith, glance ever backwards. Certainly, many Irish nationalists presented themselves as anxious to restore a pre-colonial society, pure in its authentic Irishness. In *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism*, John Hutchinson drew upon the Irish example to examine the bases and purposes of this ideology and he has proposed more recently that this form of

nationalism seeks "the defense and activation of the historical community," as well as "a moral regeneration of the national community by returning to the spirit of its ancient past encoded in its myths, memories and culture."<sup>6</sup> Hutchinson was unhappy with the notion that this was little more than the opportunistic "invention of tradition" identified by scholars such as Eric Hobsbawm,<sup>7</sup> but he also accepted that the nationalists he had studied were often "reformers in conservative dress. They seek to use tradition to legitimate social innovation [...] building on indigenous traditions rather than [...] obliterating them."<sup>8</sup> Karl Marx, too, noted the paradox that the most radical of revolutionaries often choose to appear in antic clothing: "[J]ust as they seem to be occupied with revolutionizing themselves and things, creating something that did not exist before, precisely in such epochs of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service, borrowing from them names, battle slogans, and costumes in order to present this new scene in world history in time-honored disguise and borrowed language."<sup>9</sup>

In this paper, I want to examine some elements of social innovation associated with the Young Ireland movement of the 1840s. The early decades of the nineteenth century was a time when religious discrimination was the focus of anti-British energies in Ireland. A broad-based campaign for political liberties and the right of an Irish parliament to legislate for an Irish people had produced an unsuccessful rebellion in 1798. The subsequent dissolution of the Irish parliament and the enforced Union under the British crown demoralized nationalists. The campaign to remove the civil disabilities of Catholics revived political organization and discourse in Ireland but, insofar as it challenged British domination, it did so in the name of Irish Catholics and thus risked anticipating a distinctly confessional tone for an independent Ireland. Nevertheless, its concern with tithes, the taxation of land to support the established Protestant church, raised more general issues about the propriety of property. By questioning the legality of the Protestant establishment, the Irish anti-tithe movement begged wider questions about the legitimacy of the colonial state. These matters were brought to the fore when Daniel O'Connell (1775-1847) split with the English Whig party and agitated separately as an Irish organization for the repeal of the Union. With a series of mass meetings in 1842 and 1843, O'Connell marched a good share of the Irish polity up the hill of defiance. In October 1843, O'Connell promised a mass meeting for Clontarf, the site of a battle where in 1014 Brian Boru had led an Irish army to victory against Viking invaders. The British government declared the meeting to be insurrectionary and, in submitting to the ban, O'Connell not only deflated his movement but also alienated its more radical thinkers: those who were reflecting upon the interdependence of economic and political questions.

The relations between property and state formed the colonial political economy of Ireland, and in taking up these matters, nationalists could be some distance from the matters of genealogy and descent that are part of the historical narrative of nationalism, at least as reported by scholars such as Smith. Instead, this nationalist imaginary describes a political geography for the relations between Britain and Ireland, and between urban and rural Ireland. These anxieties about property and the state shaped the development of the Young Ireland movement and the cultural and political renaissance it developed through its journal, *The Nation*.<sup>10</sup> It was called Young Ireland because many of its leaders shared with Guiseppe Mazzini's Young Italy movement of the 1830s and 1840s a belief that force of arms would be necessary and justified to dislodge imperial rule and establish an independent republic. Young Ireland broke with O'Connell's movement for Repeal of the Union, which, under pressure from the Catholic bishops, had resolutely disavowed any sort of violent insurrection.

Daniel O'Connell, himself, was no stranger to violent rhetoric, nor even to evoking the threat of a revolution averted by himself alone.<sup>11</sup> In 1840, speaking at a meeting of his Loyal National Repeal Association of Ireland, O'Connell referred in the following terms to the revolutionary potential of the Catholic priests then in training at St. Patrick's College, Maynooth:



While I live, and my influence remains unbroken, [nothing ...] shall induce us to commit a breach of the peace; but it depends upon a single life, and when I rest in the tomb that course may not be pursued (hear, hear). I had seen yesterday the boys of Maynooth, whose blood was boiling in their veins, and they asked me would not their country be free (hear)? When they grow into manhood, having served their apprenticeship in the service of old Ireland—when, I say, they grow into manhood, they will not act as their fathers did, who were born slaves and lived in habits of submission; but they being brought into the world free, will insist on freedom for their country (cheers). [... T]he wrongs inflicted may swell the bubbling current of the warm blood of young Ireland, and will not consent to any species of slavery (cheers).<sup>12</sup>

Later O'Connell came to use the term "Young Ireland" in a more derisory manner to refer to those not willing to join him in abjuring all violence. When he insisted that all must publicly disavow violence at a meeting of the Repeal Association, he did so in very clear terms: "Formerly every change was effected by physical force, but he had inculcated the doctrine that force and violence injure the holiest cause, and that the greatest political advantages are not worth one drop of blood."<sup>13</sup> O'Connell recognized that recent political change had often been effected by revolution, but this was something he decried, specifically charging that in place after place: "A sort of Young Ireland party sprung up, who succeeded in creating revolution after revolution."<sup>14</sup> O'Connell could not have been more explicit: "I draw up this resolution to draw a marked line between Young Ireland and Old Ireland (cheers). I do not accept the services of any man who does not agree with me both in theory and in practice."<sup>15</sup> O'Connell's own influence, as very likely he saw it, depended upon being the one who could deliver social peace in return for political concessions towards independence.

First by virtue of a sort of religious test, acknowledging the authority of the Catholic bishops of Ireland, and then by forswearing any resort to violence, O'Connell alienated Young Ireland from his Repeal Association. Yet Young Ireland continued to engage with matters of land and state, the central concerns of the Catholic movements of the first decades of the nineteenth century. Its differences with O'Connell incited Young Irishmen to a more systematic engagement with the political economy of colonialism and with the desirable forms of a postcolonial social contract. In this paper, I focus upon the emancipatory thought of James Fintan Lalor (1807-49), the Young Irishman who took these speculations furthest and perhaps gave most to political economy and political science.

### Lalor's reputation

The posthumous influence ascribed to Lalor is remarkable. A fellow Young Irishman described him as "one of the most powerful political writers that ever took pen in hand."<sup>16</sup> He has been credited with devising the organizational form that was the essence of Fenianism, otherwise known as the insurrectionary Irish Republican Brotherhood. Of the Head Centre of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, James O'Connor wrote that "[a]dopting the plan of a secret revolutionary organization sketched out by James Fintan Lalor, [...] James Stephens [1825-1901] gave it practical shape, and started single-handed to establish it in the four Provinces of Ireland."<sup>17</sup> With his elaboration of the notion that being limited in supply, land would ever be a natural monopoly, Lalor has been offered as the source of Henry George's (1839-1907) proposal of a single tax on the unimproved value of land, as set out in *Progress and Poverty*.<sup>18</sup> The cultural nationalist Standish O'Grady (1846-1908) described Lalor as one who believed in the common ownership of land, and he saw this theory as passing with John Mitchel (1815-1875) to the United States, "propagating itself there in the Irish-American press, and from America it has come back upon Europe, advertising itself as 'Progress and Poverty.'"<sup>19</sup>

The most radical agrarian movement in nineteenth-century Ireland was the Land League, and Lalor was acknowledged as primary inspiration by both its primary Irish strategist, Michael Davitt (1846-1906), and by its principal American supporter, John Devoy (1842-1928). Davitt was clear that: "There was no real revolutionary mind in the '48 period except Lalor's."<sup>20</sup> Although David Buckley has suggested that in giving credit to Lalor, Davitt was seeking to "retrospectively legitimize" his own conclusions, the standing of Lalor is evident in the effort.<sup>21</sup> Davitt acknowledged as Lalor's singular contribution, the insight that the remedy for Irish starvation lay in an attack upon landlordism via a "strike against rent,"<sup>22</sup> and Davitt characterized the "agrarian revolution of the Land League" as an attack upon "rent tyranny."<sup>23</sup> John Devoy, in turn, also recognized that "James Fintan Lalor might be said to be the real Father of Fenianism, as well of the Land League."<sup>24</sup>

Turning to the revolutionaries of 1916, Pádraig Pearse (1879-1916) proposed that "[t]he conception of an Irish nation has been developed in modern times chiefly by four great minds,"<sup>25</sup> and he included Lalor as one of these four who "have thought most authentically for Ireland, [whose] voices [...] have come out of the Irish struggle itself."<sup>26</sup> The most resonant encomium to Lalor came from James Connolly (1868-1916), himself the leading socialist theorist of early twentieth-century Ireland, who, when writing of the Young Ireland movement, concluded that: "[T]he palm of honour for the clearest exposition of the doctrine of revolution, social and political, must be given to James Fintan Lalor."<sup>27</sup> Connolly admired him for, "like all the really dangerous revolutionists of Ireland, [Lalor] advocated his principles as part of the creed of the democracy of the world, and not merely as applicable only to the incidents of the struggle of Ireland against England."<sup>28</sup> It is this reaching towards more general principles of justice and fairness that grounds the utopian ambition of some versions of anticolonial nationalism, and this ambition to universalism echoes the service to global human rights that Benedict Anderson identified in the nationalists he studied in *Under Three Flags*. A final testimony to the appetite for Lalor's ideas is provided by Éamon de Valera (1882-1975) who, when giving a radio broadcast that went live not only to the residents of the Irish Free State but also to the Irish in North America, and which followed the entry of Fianna Fáil into government after a decade of abstention, declared that, for expressing the policy of his new administration, he knew "no words [...] better than those of Fintan Lalor: 'Ireland her own, and all therein, from the sod to the sky.'"<sup>29</sup>

### **Lalor, father and son**

James Fintan Lalor was born to a family with a large farm of about one thousand English acres, at Tenakill, county Laois. His father Patrick Lalor (1781-1856) was a fervent supporter of Daniel O'Connell's Repeal Association and a radical opponent of the tithe. These two elements of Catholic liberation led the father to explore the relations between land and state in ways that suggested, although he personally refused, the radical conclusions later reached by his son. Patrick Lalor understood refusing to pay the tithe as the use of moral rather than physical force since the law anticipated refusal by providing for a penalty. As he explained to a parliamentary committee investigating the system of tithes: "I considered it a debt not morally binding; that if the law allowed the nonpayment of it, I conceive there was no moral obligation to enforce it."<sup>30</sup> The penalty was that the local Church of Ireland vicar could enforce payment by distraint of goods. In this case, in 1831, Rev. Latouche made a claim for the tithe due to him and upon Lalor's refusal to pay, Latouche obtained twenty ewes and their lambs from Lalor. However, Lalor branded the word "tithe" on the side of each animal and no local purchaser could be found. Nor was a purchaser to be found in Dublin, Liverpool or Manchester and, indeed, as Lalor reported with some relish, no "salesmaster would allow them on his standing; nor a bit of food would the poor animals get, until they actually died of starvation, some in Liverpool and the rest of them in Manchester."<sup>31</sup>

In 1832, on the back of the popularity of his having defied the tithe, and taking advantage of the 1829 Catholic Emancipation that opened parliamentary representation to Catholics, Patrick Lalor ran for election against local landowners and headed the poll.<sup>32</sup> At the next election (1835), the tenants of the landlord, under threat of eviction, mustered once again behind their master, and Lalor's tenure at Westminster was terminated. Patrick Lalor was appalled at this abuse of landowner power and this surely explains the following note about his parliamentary career that was published in 1847 in the *Nation*: "P. Lalor. An honest man. Retired in disgust."<sup>33</sup>

As a Catholic, Lalor considered the tithe, going as it did to support Protestant clergy, "a great hardship, [...] inasmuch as I receive no value for it."<sup>34</sup> Lalor was aware of local opposition to tithes "for time immemorial" and remarked that they had been "the cause of much bloodshed in [Laois] particularly so far as related to the White Boys," the agrarian rebels, and indeed "[a] great number of people have been from time to time executed for the illegal conduct they pursued, in striving to rid themselves of that impost of tithe."<sup>35</sup> At a meeting of the Repeal Association held in Mayborough (now Portlaoise) in January 1831, he had announced his intention to refuse henceforth to pay the tithe and this ejaculation had produced a more general defiance throughout the county of Laois. This defiance was spread beyond Laois, for posters addressing the "Tithe Payers of Ireland" appeared at least in Kildare and probably other places too. On this poster were given extracts from Lalor's speech advising others how to defy the tithe: "I will never again pay tithe: I will obstruct no law. The tithe owner will, of course, distrain my goods; but my countrymen esteem me, I am proud to say, and I do not think there is one amongst them will, under such circumstances, buy my goods so distrained and offered for sale."<sup>36</sup> Lalor's form of civil disobedience was modeled on the actions of the Quakers: "I had been for years before thinking within my own mind that there was every facility to avoid the payment of tithes, if the people were only unanimous, and acted peaceably, as the society called Quakers did."<sup>37</sup> In Patrick Lalor's argument over the tithe, then, there was an appeal to justice based on the failure of people to benefit from payments that they made, and there was, as a tactic, a refusal to pay what was considered an unjust impost.

The Repeal Association was also the context in which Patrick Lalor developed further arguments about the justice issues attending rent and land tenure. At a meeting of the Repeal Association in Castletown in 1843, he moved a motion "advocating fixity of tenure. He spoke with great force of the evils resulting to Ireland from the precarious nature of the tenure of land, and gave a powerful exposition of its disastrous results."<sup>38</sup> In 1844, to the Devon Commission on "The Occupation of Land in Ireland," Patrick Lalor explained some of the links between tenure and religion. Speaking of the county of Laois, he reported that: "[T]he tenures in this country are almost invariably at will. It was always too much the case, but about eleven years ago a meeting of the landlords (or very many of them) took place, at which they entered into a solemn promise or engagement with each other not to give any lease in future to a Catholic."<sup>39</sup> In other words, Protestant landlords had resolved to offer Catholics no security of tenure, reserving the right to evict them "at will." Patrick Lalor went on to argue that this opposition was political first and religious only as a secondary consideration. It was because Catholic tenants accepted voting direction from their local Catholic parish priest rather than from their Protestant landlord, that these landlords sought more servile tenants.

Evidence before a Select Committee on Bribery at Elections provides more context for this and makes clear the difficulty of separating religion from politics in matters relating to land. One witness claimed that a Catholic shopkeeper who in 1835 had voted for the ticket of the two Protestant landowners, Charles Coote and Thomas Vesey, found himself named on a public notice which alleged that he "gave his vote to Coote, sold his country, denied Christ and his church, perjured himself, and joined the Orangemen. I hope you neighbours will all take notice of this,

and withdraw your custom from him."<sup>40</sup> Making clear the intimate relations between religious and political contention, another list of the Catholics who voted for Coote and Vesey was headed, "A List of the tithe supporters who voted for Coote and Vesey and against the people."<sup>41</sup> At one public meeting Patrick Lalor himself moved the following motion:

That whilst we are determined to support those honest freeholders who may be oppressed for the honest exercise of their franchise by persecuting landlords, who, not content with extracting the last penny that can be made from the soil, also seek to turn to their own base purposes the franchise intrusted to the people for the public good: also pledge ourselves not to hold neighbourship, to have any dealing whatsoever with those persons who shall by their votes inflict the deadly injury on the country of returning Tory conservatives for this county.<sup>42</sup>

When he was asked about the "non-dealing" with those who voted Conservative rather than Liberal, Lalor claimed that in the face of the threats of eviction, the people had "no other mode of protecting themselves [...] and a very effectual one it is, [...] and I think a very legitimate one."<sup>43</sup>

Lacking reasonable security of title, the Catholic tenants would not make improvements because they could not be sure they would get the benefit: "With regard to the occupation of land in Ireland I have been always of opinion [...] that the practice and the law ought to be that every man, when he gets possession of land ought to have it for ever."<sup>44</sup> Beyond this, he would have set the rent at a certain amount of corn per acre so that the tenant got the benefit of any improvements made. Fixity of tenure and some means of restraining the landlord from appropriating improvements through raising rent were to become central concerns of the Land League in the last decades of the nineteenth century.

Patrick Lalor went further into legal philosophy when he argued that there was no absolute right in private property:

Before any landlord or tenant had any individual interest [...] in the land it belonged to the state. The state transferred certain rights in the land, but not an unrestricted or unlimited ownership; it transferred it subject to the support of the state in the shape of taxation, subject to have any of it re-occupied by the state which may be found necessary, and above all, it was transferred saddled with the support of the population.<sup>45</sup>

Private property in land, then, was considered by Patrick Lalor to be a conditional right and crucially its legitimacy hinged upon how efficacious were the legal and tenurial arrangements: "If the land be neglected, and not made to yield its capable produce through the mal-construction or inefficiency of the law between landlord and tenant, the state has an undoubted right to step in and regulate the law and practice."<sup>46</sup> The argument for fixity of tenure, then, was that only this would "induce the occupier of land to improve it so as to make it yield its full powers (without which the state is defrauded of part of its just rights)."<sup>47</sup> This utilitarian approach to property and tenure contributed to a wider debate concerning the political economy of Ireland, but Patrick's own contribution was constrained by his loyalty to Daniel O'Connell and his abhorrence of violence of any kind.

### **Social versus political reform**

The relations between father and son are of interest here insofar as they shed light upon the distinctive features of James Fintan's own ideas. James was the eldest of eleven sons and one daughter. He was afflicted with some curvature of the spine "which retarded his growth, and



prevented his attaining the enormous proportions of his big brothers."<sup>48</sup> As a weakly child he was educated at home, where his mother "fitted up an attic study for him, where he could be away from the noise and horse-play of his sturdy brothers, and enjoy to the full the peace and quiet which he craved. She also stood between him and the practical notions of his sturdy father."<sup>49</sup> At the age of 17, James attended for a single year at Carlow College excelling at Classics and Chemistry, prompting his father to secure his apprenticeship to a local medical man, Dr. Jacob, who prepared him further in Chemistry perhaps with a view to his taking up a medical degree.<sup>50</sup> At some time during 1827, he terminated this apprenticeship. At this point he may have gone away from home. Certainly, he was back at Tenakill in time for his father's election in 1832 and thereafter he more or less managed the household during the three years of his father's absence at Westminster.<sup>51</sup> However, while his younger brothers were reported as campaigning for the father on both the anti-tithe agitation and the related parliamentary campaign, James made no such appearance.

James aligned himself with the social and economic campaign of a land reformer, William Conner, rather than with the political campaigns led by Daniel O'Connell. Conner argued that tenants could never flourish without "the State's abridging the landlord's power over the land."<sup>52</sup> He argued that tenants needed security (or fixity) of tenure together with fair rents established by arbitration. He had reached these conclusions in 1833 and promoted this cause in fair weather and foul for the next eighteen years and initially at least he had the full support of James Fintan Lalor. He did not enjoy the same either from the leaders of the Repeal movement or from those of Young Ireland. Daniel O'Connell made a show of committing the Repeal movement to fixity of tenure but, treating property rights with great tenderness, he opposed the setting of rents by arbitration and his version of the fixity of tenure was punctured with so many qualifications that it leaked all radical implication. In 1843, after Conner had advocated a rent strike to force landlords to concede fixity and fair valuation, O'Connell expelled him from the Repeal Association.<sup>53</sup> A government inquiry into the Irish land question, popularly named after its chair the Devon Commission, published in 1845 a mountain of evidence that in Ireland, given the police and military powers they could rely upon, landlords could collect rents that amounted to extortion.<sup>54</sup> This encouraged the Young Ireland movement and its journal, the *Nation*, to endorse fixity of tenure but it too rejected the coercive setting of rents by arbitration.

By 1845, however, James had parted from Conner. Lalor was exploring a range of ways that tenants, small farmers and laborers might see an improvement in their circumstances and was involved with various agricultural cooperatives in pursuit of something like a credit union for rural folk.<sup>55</sup> To Conner this was a deviation and when, in 1847, Lalor called a meeting to create a tenant society at Holycross, Tipperary, Conner not only showed up to heckle but mounted the platform: "The two men came to blows and the platform collapsed under them; the meeting broke up in disorder, with Conner speaking from the ruined platform while Lalor's supporters chaired him to the nearest pub."<sup>56</sup> Lalor later returned to Conner's principles and even to the tactic of rent strike, but this was part of a more comprehensive rethinking of the colonial basis of landlordism than Conner had offered. Before this, Lalor had one further disillusion to suffer.

An article he wrote on agricultural cooperation may have precipitated a crisis with his father, and O'Neill suggests that this was the occasion for James leaving home in January 1844.<sup>57</sup> Some months previously, James had sent an astonishing letter to the British Prime Minister, Robert Peel. He placed his faith in Peel, in landlords, and in the British Conservatives. In the letter he offered to betray his father's political ambitions. Lalor argued that social peace was necessary before there could be social and economic improvement in Ireland. To that end, he considered the Repeal agitation pernicious:

I was, myself, at one time something more than a mere Repealer, in private feeling—but Mr. O'Connell, his agitators, and his series of wretched agitations, first disgusted me into a conservative in point of feeling, and reflection and experience have convicted me into one in point of principle. I have been driven into the conviction, more strongly confirmed by every day's experience, that it is only to a Conservative Government, to her landed proprietors, and to peace that this country can look for any improvement in her social condition.<sup>58</sup>

He introduced himself as the son of "Mr. P. Lalor [...] who then was, and I regret to say, still continues, a zealous and active Repealer," and adds that "my family-friends are all violent Repealers."<sup>59</sup> It is clear from the letter that James Fintan Lalor's primary aim was an "improvement in [Ireland's] social condition," and that, at this time, he thought it might come from "her landed proprietors."<sup>60</sup> Given his father's experience in 1835, when the local Protestant landlord threatened tenants with eviction rather than allow them to vote for the Catholic candidate, it was the wish begat the fact when Lalor affected to believe that the landlords in Ireland could be persuaded to a historic compromise with their tenants. Lalor considered the major obstacle to such an arrangement was landlord fear of the violence threatened by elements of the Repeal movement and for this reason he offered Peel such information about the movement as would aid in its suppression.

Certainly in mid 1843, when Lalor wrote, the British government was worried about violence in Ireland but it is not clear that much of this was related to the Repeal agitation. The first six months of 1843 saw eleven illegal meetings reported by the police, the same in the first half of 1842.<sup>61</sup> Such public assembly offences are part of a continuum of disorderly politics and clearly the sort of thing that Lalor wanted suppressed so that the landlords might feel safe in Ireland and thus willing to take up their civic duty towards their tenants. Taking affray, riot, fights and demonstrations associated with political parties or factions, together with these illegal processions, there were on average 170 such events in each year of the period 1837-45.<sup>62</sup> Far more threatening to landowners and large farmers was a sort of class-war violence with an annual average of 9 assaults on bailiffs, 461 arsons, 585 incidents of cattle-stealing, 292 of the maiming of cattle, 111 of the illegal shearing of sheep, 11 of the destruction of pasture known as turning up land, 21 of pound-breach or the recovering of goods that had been taken in place of unpaid rent, and fully 800 instances each year of threatening letters sent in the main to landlords or farmers judged by popular opinion to have treated harshly their tenants or laborers. This was the sort of violence that was associated with secret agrarian societies such as the Whiteboys and Ribbonism.<sup>63</sup> Over the period 1837-45, there was each year an average of 77 offences relating to the administering of unlawful oaths, 70 where people were apprehended going about armed at night, and there were 209 cases each year of the robbery of or illegal demand made for arms. This class war was about social relations in the countryside and had very little to do with matters of nationalism, tithes, or the repeal of the Union.

Yet it is in the context of the Repeal movement that Lalor told Peel that he had reached a belief in the "absolute necessity which exists, that *all* agitation for political objects should entirely cease, before any improvement can be effected in the condition of the Irish people. I am most anxious that the present Repeal-movement should be speedily and safely suppressed—not imperfectly and for a period, but fully and for ever."<sup>64</sup> Instead of the Irish Repeal Movement, Lalor looks to the British government for assistance: "[I]t is only to a Conservative government, to her landed proprietors, and to *peace* that this country can look for any improvement in her social condition."<sup>65</sup>

Given the doctrines for which Connolly and others admired Lalor, this seems an extraordinary act of faith. The themes of his later work are already here but his conclusions about

these matters had not yet received the shock that rearranged so radically the elements in this kaleidoscope. Despite his differences with Conner, Lalor's emphasis upon social and economic rather than political reform was a shared and constant feature of his thought. Buckley has deftly argued that "economics for Lalor was not a 'political' but a 'social' matter."<sup>66</sup> Lalor was not able at this point to read rural violence as being social in this sense, crediting the Repeal agitation with too much influence over this dispersed aggression towards landlords and the other agents of the landed system.

### The question of violence

Lalor's faith in the landlords soon received two severe tests. When, in the wake of the reports from the Devon Commission, modest reforms were introduced into the British House of Commons, the Irish landlords hooted them out. With a potato blight in Ireland from 1845, Peel opportunistically secured the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846, promising cheaper food for Ireland, although he full knew that in the short term scarcity of food would keep prices high. Lalor realized that the removal of the tariff against American grain would see Irish exports to Britain driven from the market and would thus complete the conversion of Ireland from a tillage economy of pigs, grain and potatoes to one of pasture.<sup>67</sup> In this context, landlords wanted to evict their tenants and to take the land back into their own hands for consolidation as grazing. In his pamphlet of 1844, only part of which has survived, Lalor criticized the Repeal press for not appreciating this revolutionary potential of the repeal of the Corn Laws.<sup>68</sup> The famine gave the landlords just this opportunity and, with no thought for the 'fair' rents Lalor advocated, the landlords seemed almost to be making war upon their tenants. Lalor reworked his earlier pamphlet for the new times and in April 1847 accused the landlords of having "doomed a people to extinction and decreed to abolish Ireland," albeit with "the unanimous and cordial support of the people of England."<sup>69</sup>

The famine of 1845-52 was an event of almost unimaginable horror. The subsistence of the majority of the Irish people rotted before it could be eaten. In the summer of 1847, three million people, fully one-third of the population, were surviving on soup provided by government.<sup>70</sup> At that point the British government decided to manage the famine in an unprecedented manner and concluded that the famine could be used to correct Irish economy and society. Comforting itself with the thought that God had a plan that was delivered by nature, the government proceeded to let people die.<sup>71</sup> And over one million did. Perhaps a further one-and-a-half million emigrated.<sup>72</sup> Daniel O'Connell died early in the famine (April 1847) barely nine months after his peace resolutions had driven the Young Irelanders from the movement. Thereafter, Young Ireland had to develop its own philosophy of the legitimate use of violence. In a letter of October 1846 to the *Cork Examiner*, Fr John Kenyon (1812-69) countered O'Connell's blanket dismissal of violence and adverting to the acceptability of capital punishment argued that:

As matters stand, the rejection of everything that could lead to violence or bloodshed is enjoined by no rule of Christian morality. Else could civil government be rejected in the bulk, because civil government not only can lead, but actually and daily does lead, to violence and bloodshed, as the records of Newgate abundantly attest.<sup>73</sup>

In a pamphlet of 1846, *Physical and Moral Force*, Kenyon went further, writing that even popes condoned violence, granting indulgences to crusaders of old. Kenyon conceded that he did "not believe that in point of fact any political rights have been attained during this century for Ireland by moral force alone."<sup>74</sup> Kenyon wrote to the *Nation* in November 1846 with the observation that

"in all cases of controversy in which [O'Connell] was asked to interfere, I think he will have been more generally found on the side of wealth, or power, or title, or dignity."<sup>75</sup> Kenyon directed readers of the *Nation* towards the paired incubi of landlordism and colonialism. In August 1847 he told them that "England was the only nation whose baneful intercourse had robbed Ireland of her wealth and drained all her resources,"<sup>76</sup> and in February 1848 he insisted that: "If [...] the landlord class linked with [the] English interest, persist in opposing themselves to the wishes and wants of our people—say, rather in grinding and crushing them, soul and body, heart and hope,—why should [we] insist upon their company."<sup>77</sup>

This was the tone of debate in the pages of the *Nation* in the months after July 1846 when the Young Irelanders had been driven out of the Repeal Association by the oath of peaceability insisted upon by Daniel O'Connell. In January 1847 they proposed their own organization, the Irish Confederation, and at this point the resolute tone of the *Nation* encouraged James Fintan Lalor to approach its editor, Charles Gavan Duffy (1816-1903) with his new schema for Irish revolution. Lalor was animated by the imminent creation of the Confederation; yet he wanted to ensure that the ends and means of the new body would be acceptable to himself. He did not want the ambition of the new organization to be constrained by the old formula of the Repeal of the Union. He pleaded with Duffy for a more expansive goal: "Call it by some general name—*independence* if you will."<sup>78</sup> Lalor thought independence could comprise not only the legislative separation promised with a Repeal of the Union, but also an economic independence achieved by expropriating the British landlords. This brings him to his central claim that alongside the legislative independence:

A mightier question is in the land—one beside which Repeal dwarfs down into a petty parish question; one on which Ireland may not try alone her own right, but try the right of the world; on which she would be, not merely an asserter of old principles often asserted, and better asserted before her, an humble and feeble imitator and follower of other countries—but an original inventor, propounder and propagandist, in the van of the earth, and heading the nations; on which her success or her failure alike would never be forgotten by man, but would make her for ever, the lodestar of history.<sup>79</sup>

Here, in essence, was the utopian moment of Young Ireland's anticolonial nationalism. Lalor was inviting the Confederation to attempt a revolution that would have a significance for global civilization equivalent to such caesura as the French Revolution. The parallel was an important one for Lalor. Such a revolution, argued Lalor, was unlikely to be achieved purely by legal means: "[A]ny means and all means might be made illegal by Act of Parliament; and such pledge, therefore, is passive obedience."<sup>80</sup> This was the lesson he drew from O'Connell's failure. When O'Connell had, with his monster meetings, devised an instrument that could threaten British rule, the British government promptly made such meetings illegal and, in complying, O'Connell had set down the lever of civil disobedience with which he might perhaps have moved an Empire. Lalor applauded Young Ireland's refusal to foreswear illegality and even violence but as he urged his own agenda upon them he found many of its leaders committed to insurrection only in principle and not in practice.

### **The practice of revolution**

In one respect, Lalor's letter to Duffy was welcomed by the editor of the *Nation*, who had been encouraging debate about the land question since the publication of the reports of the Devon Commission in 1845. Duffy wanted to induce landowners to acknowledge the dire needs



of their tenants but he detected a whiff of Jacobinism about Lalor's land crusade. He circulated the letter among others in the Confederation and asked Lalor to explain his ideas more fully. In a further three letters, Lalor spelled out his vision of rural revolution. Duffy had seen enough. In a letter of 24 February 1847, he told Lalor that his ideas amounted to "a very bold and clever mistake."<sup>81</sup> Duffy did not believe that a peasant-led revolution was either likely or desirable but he did see the force of the argument that peasants required greater security of tenure. To this extent, Thomas D'Arcy McGee (1825-68) could reassure Lalor on 8 March 1847 that many of the leading Confederates, including Duffy, agreed that the land of Ireland should indeed belong to the people. In reply, Lalor told D'Arcy McGee that his basic principle was quite simple: "The entire ownership of Ireland moral and material up to the sun and down to the centre, is vested by right in the people of Ireland."<sup>82</sup>

The objections to Lalor were theoretical and practical. Mitchel, for example, accepted that Lalor's analysis of the land question was correct in its fundamentals and he told Lalor so.<sup>83</sup> When Lalor published an account of his views in the *Nation* in April 1847, Mitchel urged others, including O'Brien, to read it.<sup>84</sup> O'Brien, however, was not the only person to recoil at Lalor's explicit questioning of property rights. Most believed that it was wrong to imperil an alliance with the landlords by waging social war in the countryside. This was Mitchel's position until late 1847 and thus whereas Lalor called for a rent strike, Mitchel would only contemplate the withholding of poor rates.<sup>85</sup> Many argued that peasants were simply not prepared to rebel. Doheny went out to rural Queen's County (now Laois) to visit Lalor at Abbeylaxey: "I could not be persuaded that I had before me, in the poor, distorted, ill-favoured, hunch-backed, little creature, the bold propounder of the singular doctrines in the *Nation* letters."<sup>86</sup> Lalor moved to Dublin and began writing for the *Nation* but he was still unable to win the hearts and minds of the leaders of Confederation to the cause of revolution. He was not even able to convince them to take the first step of advising farmers to refuse to pay rent. Duffy was sure that the peasantry were fatalistic and supine: "Our greatest difficulty was that the largest class, instead of being capable of scientific organisation preferred to lie down and die rather than put themselves in an attitude of self-defence."<sup>87</sup> An exasperated Lalor expostulated to Mitchel: "Egad! Mr Duffy was bred a townsman."<sup>88</sup> Lalor next went out to rural Tipperary to organize among the peasants. He called a meeting of farmers at Holycross "to found a League which should assert the natural property of the people in the soil of the country, and the right of the occupying tenantry to a sufficient subsistence out of the crop, and sufficient seed for next year, superior and prior to every other claim."<sup>89</sup> This was the occasion when Lalor was shouted down by William Conner, who then persuaded the meeting to accept security of tenure and arbitration of rents as sufficient goals.<sup>90</sup>

Two developments gained Lalor a better hearing in Dublin. First, although 39 Repealers had been returned from Ireland to the new British parliament that sat from November 1847, only 17 of them were willing to vote against the introduction of a Coercion Bill for Ireland.<sup>91</sup> For Mitchel this was the ultimate proof of the treachery of the Irish landlords. They stood with the British in defense of their property against the desperate needs of their tenants who could eat only if they withheld the corn that was generally their rent. On 4 January 1848, Mitchel wrote to Lalor: "I am ashamed to be forced to admit, that on the only question we ever differed about I was wholly wrong. Last summer the time had come for giving up the humbug of 'conciliating classes,' winning over landlords to nationality and the rest of it."<sup>92</sup> But as Mitchel grew more revolutionary, he found Duffy increasingly constitutional. In December 1847, Mitchel left the *Nation*. In the Confederation, O'Brien was anxious to distance himself from Mitchel too and a series of debates in January 1848 resulted in resolutions being passed on 5 February 1848 disavowing civil war and the refusal of rents or even poor rates.<sup>93</sup> Mitchel left the Confederation. Mitchel used his own

money to set up the *United Irishman*, the first number of which was published on 12 February 1848.<sup>94</sup> Here, Mitchel expounded what he had learned from Lalor but, after Lalor refused his offer of a job on the journal, Mitchel rarely mentioned him by name.<sup>95</sup>

Alongside the conversion of Mitchel, the second development which gave Lalor's ideas wider currency was the "intoxication of hope" that followed the February revolution in France.<sup>96</sup> For Duffy and O'Brien, the French rising showed that moderate reformers, such as Alphonse de Lamartine (1790-1869), might govern in the wake of a popular rising, and the Confederation sent O'Brien and Thomas Francis Meagher (1823-67) to Paris with an address praising the revolutionaries' respect "for religion, private property, and public order."<sup>97</sup> Others drew more radical lessons. The revolution announced itself as an alliance between those with and those without property, and addressed issues such as the right to work. This mood echoed through Dublin, and the Confederation, "as a deliberate gesture to the new democratic spirit, included a working man in the delegation which was to go to Paris."<sup>98</sup> By March, many Irish nationalists had persuaded themselves that revolutionary France would be such a threat to Britain that, in order to retain its mainforce for continental battles, Her Majesty's government would be forced to offer significant concessions to any concerted Irish demands.<sup>99</sup> The rhetoric of Duffy and O'Brien became more insurrectionary as they struggled to remain at the head of a movement that anticipated imminent revolution. Meagher presented the Confederation with a green, white and orange tricolor that had been sent by sympathetic French republicans.<sup>100</sup> Mitchel was ecstatic: "Oh! my countrymen, look up, look up! Arise from the death-dust where you have long been lying, and let this light visit your eyes also, and touch your souls. Let your ears drink in the blessed words, 'Liberty! Fraternity! Equality!' which are soon to ring from pole to pole."<sup>101</sup>

Unlike Lalor, the Confederation held the greatest chance of success to lie in an urban rather than rural revolution. This was where they had organized clubs, thirty in Dublin alone, each with between two hundred and five hundred members but "not one club in the agricultural districts."<sup>102</sup> Mitchel was brought to trial and on 27 May 1848 was sentenced to fourteen years transportation to a penal colony in Australia for the newly created crime of treason-felony, effectively the preaching of civil war. Meagher and Richard O'Gorman (1826-95) inspected the Dublin clubs to see if they might affect Mitchel's rescue but found them "unprepared, unorganised, unarmed, and incapable of being even roughly disciplined."<sup>103</sup> After the sentencing, Mitchel asked the court if he might promise continued defiance from the others present. He "was then removed, and great confusion ensued from the efforts of his friends to shake hands with him."<sup>104</sup> As Doheny recalled: "Men stood in affright, and looked in each other's faces wonderingly."<sup>105</sup> No rescue was attempted and the guilt felt by his friends tightened still further the revolutionary spring: "The transportation of a man as a felon, for uttering sentiments held and professed by at least five-sixths of his countrymen, seemed to me so violent and insulting a national wrong, that submission to it must be taken to signify incurable slavishness."<sup>106</sup> The suppressed *United Irishman* was replaced by the equally inflammatory *Irish Tribune* and *Irish Felon*. The latter was edited by John Martin (1812-75) and had Lalor as a staff writer. Martin, Duffy and others decided to conspire in the procuring of arms for a rebellion.<sup>107</sup> Delegates were sent to the United States to raise money, and Confederate clubs sprang up wherever Irish people lived in England and Scotland.<sup>108</sup> In June 1847 Meagher had addressed the Confederates of Liverpool among which were included Terence Bellew MacManus (1811-61), whose transatlantic funerary rites would later be such a pivotal moment in the development of Fenianism.<sup>109</sup> In March 1848 Doheny, in company with the Irish-born Chartist leader Feargus O'Connor (1794-1855), spoke on the Irish cause to a meeting of fifteen-to-twenty thousand Chartists at Oldham Edge, near Oldham.<sup>110</sup> In April, a gun shop was opened for the Irish in Liverpool, and in May one opened in Manchester.<sup>111</sup> To intimidate the Liverpool Irish, a military encampment was established in Everton, but the local John Mitchel Club continued to

drill openly.<sup>112</sup> Chartists came to Dublin from Manchester (Leech) and Glasgow (Kydd) to assure the Confederates of cooperation “whenever a blow was struck.”<sup>113</sup> From Dublin, Lalor begged his brother to join him for the rising: “Come—even if father be dying.”<sup>114</sup> When Habeas Corpus was suspended, a supreme council of five was elected to direct the Dublin clubs. Lalor was not chosen and set off for Tipperary to join O’Brien, but he was arrested on July 28 at Ballyhane, kept at Nenagh jail and then sent to Newgate prison, Dublin, where his fragile health broke.<sup>115</sup> In Newgate, Lalor was in daily contact with the many journalists of the Confederation who had been arrested earlier in the month. Duffy was among them, and Lalor tried to convince him of the need to launch another journal to take up again the revolutionary cause: “I acknowledged that Ireland had a *casus belli*; but I denied that she had the power, or even the disposition, to prosecute it in 1849.”<sup>116</sup>

The attempt to induce the gentry to lead a revolt of all the classes had failed. The urban clubs set up by the Confederates were unarmed, only too well aware of the odds against them, and reluctant to initiate the rebellion. Forced into the countryside, the urban rebels did indeed find an underground culture of resistance. On the run after the failure of the rising directed by O’Brien, Doheny found ready assistance in the countryside including a man who “taught me the password of his clan which I was to use on certain contingencies.”<sup>117</sup> Doheny had occasion to be grateful for this secret bond of clan. When D’Arcy McGee returned to Ireland from an aborted mission to secure arms in Scotland, he was landed at Sligo where he found that “there never had been in Sligo or Leitrim any local Confederate or even ‘Repeal’ organisation. The only local societies were secret-Molly Maguires and Ribbonmen.”<sup>118</sup> Nevertheless, they promised to muster two thousand men within a week once they were sure that the rising in the South had truly begun: “On this agreement, a trusty messenger was despatched to Tipperary, by way of Roscommon and Westmeath (through which the ‘Molly Maguires’ had established the agency known among Canadians as an ‘underground railway’).”<sup>119</sup> The respect for property among the bourgeois nationalists ensured that they could not but fail to capitalize upon this insurrectionary potential. Upon his release from prison, Lalor gathered about him a group of rebels who were unafraid of conspiracy, including several such as John O’Leary (1830-1907) who were later prominent Fenians. Together with Thomas Clarke Luby (1821-1901), Lalor went to visit Kenyon in August of 1849 in order to test the revolutionary temperature in north Tipperary but, and it would seem unbeknownst to them, Kenyon had already promised his bishop to lead no such rising.<sup>120</sup> On 16 September 1849, they attempted revolution in Tipperary and Waterford. Among others, John O’Mahony (1816-77) returned from exile in Paris to help.<sup>121</sup> In Tipperary the attempt was abandoned for want of support. In Waterford a police station was taken at Cappoquin, but Lalor and Luby were soon arrested and the leaders of the raid on the police station, Joseph Brennan (1828-57) and Savage, fled to the United States. Lalor was soon out of prison, in time to die of bronchitis on 17 December 1849.

By directing their attention to rural revolution, Lalor had put nationalists in touch with the traditions of rural resistance, a development that shaped the tactics of the Fenians thereafter. At the same time, by showing the organic connection between economic and political sovereignty, Lalor exposed the class basis of many nationalist hesitations and reservations, and he laid the groundwork for a dialogue between socialism and nationalism around questions of land reform and colonialism which dominated, for example, the theoretical works of James Connolly. Most important, perhaps, by concentrating on the land question, Lalor invited serious speculation about the social order it was hoped to implement after independence. This utopian ambition is perhaps the most significant of Lalor’s legacies.

### A revolution in theory

Lalor was an avid reader of the *Nation*. From the writings of Thomas Davis, he took an emphasis upon the history of conquest and, from John O'Donovan's historical studies, he retained an image of a communal, democratic, pre-conquest island. Like Davis, he saw the fertility of the land as guarantor of the viability of a self-governing nation. Like Davis, he saw the social structure of the country by light of the conquest.<sup>122</sup> For Lalor, though, the crucial question was not the evocation of a pluralist people but the construction of a just economic order out of the exploitative despoliation of occupation by foreign powers. Lalor was not in thrall to a political compact with landlords and did not see the rights of property as absolute. The propertied basis of class relations was basic to his understanding of the social structure of rural Ireland in a way that was not true of Davis. In the abstract, he held that "a secure and independent agricultural peasantry" was the essential and only firm "foundation" for a nation.<sup>123</sup> For any country, food was the "first want" and even manufacturing relied upon "the support of a numerous and efficient agricultural yeomanry."<sup>124</sup> From observation, Lalor concluded that the lot of the small farmer in Ireland was much better than that of the wage laborer.<sup>125</sup> In his opinion, a serious, but unnoticed, consequence of the Famine was the derangement of rural class relations with small tenant farmers being reduced to wage labor.<sup>126</sup> The poor law acted in the same direction. The English poor law from 1834 aimed at confining aid to the wholly destitute, seeking thereby to reduce the dependence of the able-bodied upon the dole of out-relief. These principles were introduced progressively into the Irish system. During the Famine, farmers were refused aid as long as they had any grain to sell. This meant that they could not retain seed to sow for next year's crop: "This was to declare in favor of pauperism, and to vote for another famine. [...] To me it seems it would have been safer to incur the risk of pauperizing *their feelings* than the certainty of pauperizing *their means*; and better even to take away *the will* to be independent than to take away *the power*."<sup>127</sup> His understanding of the rural class structure made Lalor even more suspicious than Davis of a version of Repeal that would merely empower the Irish landlords since this would be to set a new group of Irish tyrants in place of their English predecessors.<sup>128</sup> True nationalism implied a concern for the common good. The good faith of the Irish gentry was subject to one simple test. If the landlords sided with English oppression against peasant resistance they would be guilty of treason.<sup>129</sup> By supporting the Coercion Act in December 1847 the gentry announced itself an enemy of the people. In clearing their estates, the landlords were trying to abolish Ireland, to eliminate the Irish people. Lalor hoped that the people would not stand for it.<sup>130</sup>

Lalor brought together two strands in his treatment of the land question. The first was the injustice of the conquest. The second was a defense of a sort of moral economy, which had been undercut by the conquest and was further menaced by the political economy of capitalism. The anti-modern moral critique of capitalism was common to Lalor, to Davis and to groups such as the Ribbonmen: "The secret societies practiced a kind of preservative violence. Their goal was less revolution than the restoration of a customary moral economy which the forces of capitalist modernization were gravely jeopardizing."<sup>131</sup> Lalor's synthesis of these historical and economic themes was achieved through an account of the social contract as legitimizing resistance and with a sketch of the ethical basis of a new dispensation. The prevailing property relations in rural Ireland were subject to the historical criticism that they were unjust and to the economic criticism that they failed to keep alive the Irish people. In Ireland, property relations could not be justified on the grounds of first occupancy because the land had been stolen from the Irish people by the occupying British forces.<sup>132</sup> Nor could landowners appeal to the argument that the productivity of the soil was their own creation. Lalor argued that the soil bore fruit by god's leave alone. As a gift from god, earth's bounty was entrusted to humanity as a whole and no individual could use



or own it except by the consent of all other men.<sup>133</sup> Private property in land, then, was a collective decision taken for the greater good. Land was distributed among individual owners because this had been found to be the most effective way of maximizing the social good of food production. The division of lands should result in an economy of small peasant farmers: "When it is made by agreement there will be equality of distribution, which equality of distribution will remain permanent within certain limits. For under natural laws, landed property has rather a tendency to divide than to accumulate."<sup>134</sup> In the original position, then, individuals would agree to private property because this made farming efficient but they would hardly agree to any gross inequality in the distribution of land. In contrast, the property arrangements imposed by the British involved just such a gross inequality and shored up this inequality by making partible inheritance illegal. The social contract maintained by force of British occupation was unjust. It was also a failure.

Lalor found plenty that was rotten in the state of Ireland. The people were starving. The farmers were being thrown off the land. Landlords exported grain. Land was being given over to cattle while people were being given over to the high seas or the graveyard. The British government aided and abetted this immiseration. By direct act of god or indirect act of nature, Irish society stood condemned:

When society fails to perform its duty and fulfil its office of providing for its people; it must take another and more effective form, or it must cease to exist. When its members begin to die out under destitution—when they begin to perish in thousands under famine and the effects of famine—when they begin to desert and fly from the land in hundreds of thousands under the force and fear of deadly famine—then it is time to see it is God's will that society should stand dissolved, and assume another shape and action; and he works his will by human hands and natural agencies. This case has arisen even now in Ireland, and the effect has already followed in part. Society stands dissolved.<sup>135</sup>

The abject failure of the social order meant, in Lalor's view, that "a clear original right returns and reverts to the people—the right of establishing and entering into a new social arrangement."<sup>136</sup> The granting of property rights, then, is a conditional matter subject to the test of being found to be in the public interest: "I hold and maintain that the entire soil of a country belongs of right to the people of that country, and is the rightful property not of any one class, but of the nation at large, in full effective possession, to let to whom they will on whatever tenures, rents, services, and conditions they will."<sup>137</sup> The people of Ireland had a permanent right to review such matters as the tenure of their lands: "I rest it on no temporary and passing conditions but on principles that are permanent and imperishable, and universal; available to all times and to all countries, as well as to our own."<sup>138</sup> The British occupation denied this right to the Irish, for those who control the land end up making the laws:

A people whose lands and lives are thus in the keeping and custody of others, instead of in their own, are not in a position of common safety. The Irish famine of '46 is example and proof. The corn crops were sufficient to feed the island. But the landlords *would* have their rents in spite of the famine, and in defiance of those who raised it. They took the whole harvest and left hunger to those who raised it. Had the people of Ireland been the landlords of Ireland, not a single human creature would have died of hunger, nor the failure of the potato been considered of any consequence.<sup>139</sup>

According to Lalor, the Irish people were subject to "slavery, with all its horrors, and with none of its physical comforts and security."<sup>140</sup> It is for this reason that he urged nationalists to move beyond the political goal of Repeal to the economic goal of "full and absolute independence," meaning "[t]he soil of Ireland for the people of Ireland."<sup>141</sup> The Irish had the right to defend their lives: "The present salvation and future security of this country require that the English government should at once be abolished, and the English garrison of landlords instantly expelled. Necessity demands it—the great necessity of self-defense. Self-defense—self-protection—it is the first law of nature, the first duty of man."<sup>142</sup> The new social contract must meet the test of sustaining life. Tenants should assert immediately their claim "to a full and sufficient subsistence out of the crops they have raised, and to a sufficiency of seed for next year's crops," before they made any payment of rent.<sup>143</sup> If rent came before food or seed, it starved the people this year or next, and as such was unjust.

Lalor's revolutionary strategy sprang from the same considerations. In the face of the famine, "I selected as the *mode* of reconquest, to refuse payment of rent and resist process of ejectment."<sup>144</sup> To achieve this the farmers needed to be organized in a sort of militia, an armed and disciplined peasant army that Lalor saw as the basis for open rebellion. Lalor criticized Mitchel's preference for a spontaneous urban insurrection, dismissing the proposed putsch: "I want a prepared, organized and resistless revolution. *You* only have an unprepared, disorderly and vile jacquerie."<sup>145</sup> Lalor wanted to see developed a parallel set of institutions in Ireland through which the people would learn the discipline of self-government.<sup>146</sup> A "moral insurrection" in the countryside, based on resisting evictions, would draw the British army out of urban barracks into a diffuse rural war in which they would stand clear as the aggressors.<sup>147</sup> The British army could be hindered in its aggression through the destruction of roads, bridges and railway lines.<sup>148</sup> These forms of passive resistance would postpone but might not avoid the necessity for armed conflict but the British would be forced to initiate the violence and the Irish could appeal to the claims of justice implicit in the defense of life and land.

Lalor saw this as the start of a European movement as significant as that which rippled out from the French Revolution of 1789: "The right of the people to make the laws—this produced the first modern earthquake, whose latent shocks, even now, are heaving in the heart of the world. The right of the people to own the land—this will produce the next."<sup>149</sup> It was not enough that nationalists such as those in the Confederation should seek an alliance with landlords in pursuit of the breaking of the Union: "They wanted an alliance with the landowners. They chose to consider them as Irishmen, and imagined they could induce them to hoist the green flag. They wished to preserve an Aristocracy. They desired not a *democratic* but a merely *national* revolution."<sup>150</sup> The goal for the Irish should be "[n]ot to repeal the Union, then, but to repeal the Conquest."<sup>151</sup> It was for these reasons that Lalor spoke of the political claims of Repeal as "a petty parish question" whereas the economic demands of land reform might be asserted by the Irish on behalf of all the conquered peoples of the world. "[H]eading all the nations," Ireland would be "the lodestar of history."<sup>152</sup> Connolly noted the cosmopolitan dimension of this appeal: "Lalor [...] advocated his principles as part of the creed of the democracy of the world, and not merely as applicable only to the incidents of the struggle of Ireland against England."<sup>153</sup> Only this sort of universal and expansive goal could animate an effective revolution. Lalor asserted that "a petty enterprise seldom succeeds."<sup>154</sup> On this basis, the Irish might pursue a principled and not merely a tactical alliance with the Chartists. Indeed, Lalor argued that the *Irish Felon* should appoint to its editorial board at least one of the English Chartists who were sympathetic to the Irish cause.<sup>155</sup>

Lalor had travelled quite some distance from the religious inflection of the tithe war and the social economy of Conner's land reform. The crucial innovation was to insist on the interdependence of landlordism and colonialism. His analysis of the injustice of Irish property

relations came back to the original theft of the land from the people of Ireland and its gifting instead to an alien class, a class which thereafter could extort rents from Irish people even at the peril of Irish lives. In face of the Famine, any social contract was dissolved, having failed the test of sustaining life. Independence, then, was needed in order to set aright the Irish social contract. This new social order required that control over Irish affairs be retained within the island of Ireland and anticolonial nationalism is made prospective and not merely retrospective. This was the meaning of Lalor's appeal to Duffy that the Confederation adopt a broad understanding of nationality: "full and absolute independence."<sup>156</sup>

Yes! Ireland SHALL be free,  
From the centre to the sea;  
Then hurra for Liberty!  
Says the *Shan Van Vocht*.<sup>157</sup>

## NOTES

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- 6 John Hutchinson, *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism: The Gaelic Revival and the Creation of the Irish Nation State* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1987); Hutchinson, "[Re-Interpreting Cultural Nationalism](#)," *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 45, no. 3 (1999): 392-407, 398, 400.
- 7 Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1-14.
- 8 Hutchinson, "Re-Interpreting Cultural Nationalism," 404.
- 9 Karl Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte" [1852], trans. Saul K. Padover, in David Fernbach (ed.), *Karl Marx: Surveys from Exile* (London: Penguin, 1973), 143-249, 143.
- 10 Gerry Kearns, "Time and Some Citizenship: Nationalism and Thomas Davis," *Bullán: An Irish Studies Journal* 5 (2001): 23-54.
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- 13 Charles Gavan Duffy, *Four Years of Irish History, 1845-49* (London: Cassell, Petter, Galpin, 1883), 192.
- 14 Loc. cit.
- 15 "Conciliation Hall," *Freeman's Journal* (14 July 1846): 2-3, 3.
- 16 John Savage (1828-88) quoted in, C. O'Shannon, "James Fintan Lalor," in Michael J. MacManus (ed.), *Thomas Davis and Young Ireland* (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1945): 68-70, 69.
- 17 James O'Connor, "James Stephens, the Head Centre: Personal Recollections," *Southern Star* (6 April 1901), 2.

- 18 Henry George, *Progress and Poverty: An Inquiry into the Cause of Industrial Depressions and of Increase of Want with Increase of Wealth: The Remedy* (Garden City NY: Doubleday, Page, 1920 [1872]).
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- 20 Michael Davitt, *The Fall of Feudalism in Ireland, or The Story of the Land League Revolution* (London: Harper and Brothers, 1904), 58.
- 21 David N. Buckley, *James Fintan Lalor: Radical* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1990), 91.
- 22 *Ibid.*, 56.
- 23 *Ibid.*, 92.
- 24 John Devoy, *Recollections of an Irish Rebel* (New York: Chase D. Young, 1929), 17.
- 25 Pádraig Pearse, "Ghosts" [1915], in *idem* (ed.) *Collected Works of Pádraic H. Pearse: Political Writings and Speeches* (Dublin: Phoenix Publishing, 1924), 219-250, 239.
- 26 *Ibid.*, 246.
- 27 James Connolly, *Labour in Irish History* (Dublin: Maunsel, 1914 [1910]), 185-6.
- 28 Connolly, *Labour in Irish History*, 188.
- 29 John Brannigan, *Race in Modern Irish Literature and Culture* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 149.
- 30 British Parliamentary Papers [BPP] 1831-2 (663) xxii, 181, *Second Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords, Appointed to Inquire into the Collection and Payment of Tithes in Ireland*, 62.
- 31 "Tithes! Tithes! Tithes!" *Freeman's Journal* (12 September 1836): 1.
- 32 Buckley, *Lalor*, 14.
- 33 Quoted in Lilian Fogarty, *James Fintan Lalor: Patriot and Political Essayist (1807-1849)* (Dublin: Talbot Press, 1919), xviii. Fogarty suggested that Charles Gavan Duffy, as editor of the *Nation*, was reporting on Patrick Lalor's disenchantment with Daniel O'Connell, but I think she strained too hard in assimilating the father's to the views of the son, particularly given the many evidences of father trying to discipline son for hostility to O'Connell and for proclivity towards insurrection.
- 34 BPP 1831-2 (663), 64.
- 35 BPP 1831-2 (508), xxi, 245, *Second Report from the Select Committee on Tithes in Ireland*: 376
- 36 BPP 1831-2 (271), xxii, 1, *Minutes of Evidence Taken Before the Select Committee of the House Lords Appointed to Inquire into the Collection and Payment of Tithes in Ireland*: 29.
- 37 BPP 1831-2 (663), 68.
- 38 "The Repeal Movement in the Queen's County," *Freeman's Journal* (17 February 1843): 3.
- 39 BPP 1845 [657], xxi, 1, *Evidence taken before Her Majesty's Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of the Law and Practice in Respect to the Occupation of Land in Ireland. Part III*: 329.
- 40 BPP 1835 (547), viii, 1, *Select Committee on Preventing Bribery, Corruption and Intimidation at Elections*: 285.
- 41 *Loc. cit.*
- 42 *Ibid.*, 286-7.
- 43 *Ibid.*, 533.
- 44 BPP 1845 [657], 334.
- 45 *Ibid.*, 607.
- 46 *Loc. cit.*
- 47 *Loc. cit.*
- 48 Noneen Clare [pseud.], "Tenakill: James Fintan Lalor's Home," *Kilkenny People* (21 November 1936): 8. This was probably someone known to the family since this is the earliest known publication of quotations from letters of James Fintan Lalor to his family.



- 49 Loc. cit.
- 50 Thomas P. O'Neill, *James Fintan Lalor* [1962], trans. John T. Goulding (Dublin: Golden Publications, 2003), 27.
- 51 Ibid., 30.
- 52 William Conner, *The True Political Economy of Ireland: Or, Rack-Rent the One Great Cause of All her Evils, with its Remedy* (Dublin: Wakeman, 1835), iii.
- 53 George O'Brien, "William Conner," *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 12, no. 46 (1923): 279-289.
- 54 O'Neill, "The Irish Land Question, 1830-50," *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 44:175 (1955): 325-336.
- 55 O'Neill, *Lalor*,
- 56 Patrick Maume, "William Conner," in James McGuire and James Quinn (eds), *Dictionary of Irish Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); <http://dib.cambridge.org>.
- 57 O'Neill, *Lalor*: 17.
- 58 Ibid., 39.
- 59 Ibid., 38.
- 60 Ibid., 39.
- 61 These data on crimes are from monthly returns made by the Irish constabulary: BPP 1843 [460] li, 49, *A Return of Outrages Reported by the Constabulary in Ireland During the Years 1837, 1838, 1839, 1840, and 1841; a Like Return of Outrages During Each Month of the Year 1842; and for the Months of January, February, and March, 1843*: 9-20; BPP 1843 (276) li, 169, *Outrages (Ireland). A Return of Outrages Reported to the Constabulary Office, Dublin Castle, During the Month of April 1843*: 3-4; BPP 1843 (352) li, 173, *Outrages (Ireland). A Return of Outrages in Ireland Specially reported to the Constabulary Office, Dublin Castle, During the Month of May 1843*: 2-3; BPP 1843 (419) li, 177, *Outrages (Ireland). A Return of Outrages in Ireland Specially Reported to the Constabulary Office, Dublin Castle, During the Month of June 1843*: 3-4.
- 62 BPP 1843 [460], 3-4; BPP 1846 (217), xxv, 451, *Outrages (Ireland). A return of outrages Specially Reported to the Constabulary Office in Ireland, During the ear 1842, 1843, 1844 and 1845. Abstract Return of Total Number of Persons in Ireland Appearing by the Returns of the Clerks of the Crown and Clerks of the Peace of the Several Counties, &c. to Have Been Committed for Trial, or Discharged, &c. in the Years 1844 and 1845*: 1.
- 63 Tom Garvin, "Defenders, Ribbonmen and Others: Underground Political Networks in Pre-Famine Ireland," *Past and Present* 96 (1982): 133-155.
- 64 O'Neill, *Lalor*: 36-7.
- 65 Ibid., 39.
- 66 Buckley, *Lalor*: 63.
- 67 O'Neill, *Lalor*: 47.
- 68 National Library of Ireland [NLI] MS 340/59, "To the Landowners of Ireland," 10 January 1844: f. 46.
- 69 O'Neill, *Lalor*, 150.
- 70 William J. Smyth, "The Longue Durée—Imperial Britain and Colonial Ireland," in John Crowley, William J. Smyth, and Mike Murphy (eds) *The Atlas of the Great Irish Famine, 1845-52* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2012), 46-63, 49
- 71 James S. Donnelly, *The Great Irish Potato Famine* (Phoenix Mill, UK: Sutton Publishing, 2001).
- 72 Cormac Ó Gráda, *Black '47 and Beyond: The Great Irish Famine in History, Economy, and Memory* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999).
- 73 Fogarty, *Father John Kenyon: A Patriot Priest of Forty-Eight* (Dublin: Whelan, 1921), 57.
- 74 Ibid., 26.

- 75 Ibid., 54.
- 76 Ibid., 100.
- 77 Ibid., 88.
- 78 Lalor, "To Charles Gavan Duffy, Editor of the 'Nation'" [11 January 1847] in O'Neill, *Lalor*: 133-6, 134.
- 79 Loc. cit.
- 80 Ibid., 135.
- 81 Quoted in Kevin B. Nowlan, "The Political Background," in Robert Dudley Edwards and Thomas Desmond Williams (eds), *The Great Famine: Studies in Irish history, 1845-52* (Dublin: Lilliput Press 1994 [1956]), 129-206, 171.
- 82 Fogarty, "Biographical Note," in *Idem.*, *Lalor*: ix-xx, xxiii. In the eighteenth-century folksong, "Shan Van Vocht," the old woman who is the personification of Ireland asks if Ireland will be free when the French come to support a nationalist uprising. The reply can be heard echoing in Lalor's phrasing: "Yes! Ireland SHALL be free, | From the centre to the sea; | Then hurra for Liberty! Says the *Shan Van Vocht*"; "Shan Van Vocht," trans. Thomas Kinsella, in Kinsella (ed.) *The New Oxford Book of Irish Verse* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 256-7, ll 53-6.
- 83 Kearns, "'[Educate that Holy Hatred](#)': Place, Trauma and Identity in the Irish Nationalism of John Mitchel," *Political Geography* 20, no. 7 (2001): 885-911.
- 84 Letter of 22 April 1847, quoted in: William Dillon, *The Life of John Mitchel, Vol. I* (London: K. Paul, Trench, 1888), 157.
- 85 Ibid., 184.
- 86 Quoted in Duffy, *Four Years of Irish History*, 168.
- 87 Ibid., 169.
- 88 Letter of 21 June 1847, quoted in Steve Knowlton, "The Enigma of Charles Gavan Duffy: Looking for Clues in Australia," *Éire-Ireland* 31 (1996): 189-208, 200.
- 89 Duffy, *Four Years of Irish History*, 178.
- 90 Fogarty, "Biographical Note," xxix.
- 91 Nowlan, "Political Background," 183.
- 92 Quoted in Fogarty, *Lalor*, 120.
- 93 On Mitchel's motion that the Confederation should abandon constitutionalism, there were 188 ayes and 317 noes: Duffy, *Four Years of Irish History*, 186.
- 94 Mitchel, "Last Conquest of Ireland (Perhaps)" [1850], in *Idem.*, *The Crusade of the Period; and Last Conquest of Ireland (Perhaps)* (New York: Lynch, Cole and Meehan, 1873), 96-324, 259.
- 95 Duffy claimed that Lalor rejected the position because he found the salary derisory: Duffy, *Four Years of Irish History*, 186.
- 96 Ibid., 190.
- 97 Ibid., 201.
- 98 Nowlan, "Political Background," 191. The working man selected was a silk-weaver named Edward Holywood: Duffy, *Four Years of Irish History*: 201; Arthur Griffith, "Contemporaries Mentioned in 'The Felon's Track,'" in Michael Doheny, *The Felon's Track, or the History of the Attempted Outbreak in Ireland, Embracing the Leading Events in the Irish Struggle from the Year 1843 to the Close of 1848* (Dublin: Gill, 1914 [1849]), 302-316, 307.
- 99 Nowlan, "Political Background," 189. In the event, the one thing the young French republic wanted to avoid was a confrontation with Britain. Lamartine, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, was lobbied by the British before the Irish delegation arrived and the Irish were told that France would not interfere in Britain's internal affairs.

- 100 John Mitchel, *The History of Ireland from the Treaty of Limerick to the Present Time: Being a Continuation of the History of the Abbé MacGeoghegan*, Vol. II (Glasgow: Cameron Ferguson, 1899 [1867]), 227, 231.
- 101 *United Irishman*, 4 March 1848, quoted in John Newsinger, "John Mitchel and Irish Nationalism," *Literature and History* 6 (1980), 182-200, 189.
- 102 Duffy, *Four Years of Irish History*, 213.
- 103 Loc. cit.
- 104 John G. Hodges, *Report of the Trial of John Mitchel for Felony, Before the Right Honourable Baron Lefroy, and the Right Hon. Justice Moore, at Commission Court, Dublin, May, 1848* (Dublin: Alexander Thom, 1848), 98.
- 105 Doheny, *Felon's Track*, 138.
- 106 John Martin, quoted in Mitchel, "Last Conquest," 296.
- 107 Duffy, *Four Years*, 218.
- 108 Ultimately £10,000 was raised in the North America but it arrived too late to be used for the insurrection for which it was intended. The money was returned: Ibid., 249.
- 109 John Denvir, *The Irish in Britain from the Earliest Times to the Fall and Death of Parnell* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1892), 134.
- 110 Ibid., 138.
- 111 Ibid., 139.
- 112 Ibid., 141-2.
- 113 Duffy, *Four Years of Irish History*, 219.
- 114 Letter of 17 July 1848 to Richard Lalor, quoted in Fogarty, *Lalor*: 119. Richard joined the Confederation: Fogarty, "Biographical note," xxx.
- 115 Fogarty, "Biographical Note," xxxiii-xxxv; Duffy, *Four Years of Irish History*: 229, 235; Cecil Woodham-Smith, *The Great Hunger, Ireland 1845-9* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1962), 417.
- 116 Duffy, *Four Years of Irish History*, 275.
- 117 Doheny, *Felon's Track*, 256.
- 118 "Thomas Darcy McGee's narrative of 1848" [1850] in Ibid., 289-97, 294. McGee had been spotted in Edinburgh, which explained his hasty return to Ireland via Whitehaven.
- 119 Duffy, *Four Years of Irish History*, 244.
- 120 Fogarty, *Kenyon*, 119-20.
- 121 John Rutherford, *The Secret History of the Fenian Conspiracy; Its Origin, Objects, and Ramifications, Volume I* (London: C.K. Paul, 1877), 48. O'Mahony repaired later to Paris and went on to found the Fenian movement in the United States. Luby and Savage were also to become leading Fenians.
- 122 Kearns, "Time and Some Citizenship."
- 123 Lalor, "A New Nation" [1847], in Fogarty, *Lalor*: 7-25, 21.
- 124 Ibid., 22-3.
- 125 Lalor, "Tenant's Right and Landlord Law" [1847], in Fogarty, *Lalor*, 26-37, 28.
- 126 Lalor, "A New Nation," 9.
- 127 Lalor, "Tenant's Right," 35. This article was published in May 1847. Throughout the year, the British parliament debated reforms to the Irish poor law with the *London Times* supporting from March onwards, the proposal of the Dublin M.P., William Gregory (1817-92), that no farmer with more than a quarter acre of land should be entitled to relief. This was included in the Act passed that November and the proletarianising of the tenant farmers proceeded apace: O'Neill, "The Organisation and Administration of Relief, 1845-52," in Edwards and Williams, *Great Famine*, 207-259, 253.
- 128 Lalor, "A New Nation," 15.

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- 129 Ibid., 17.
- 130 Ibid., 24-5.
- 131 Terry Eagleton, *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger: Studies in Irish Culture* (London: Verso, 1995), 84.
- 132 Lalor, "The Faith of a Felon" [1848], in Fogarty, *Lalor*, 92-105, 99.
- 133 Ibid., 100.
- 134 Ibid., 101.
- 135 Lalor, "A New Nation," 10.
- 136 Quoted in Nowlan, "Political Background," 172.
- 137 Lalor, "Letter to the *Irish Felon*" [1848], in Fogarty, *Lalor*, 52-66, 61.
- 138 Lalor, "Faith," 98.
- 139 Lalor, "Letter to *Felon*," 62.
- 140 Loc. cit.
- 141 Ibid., 57.
- 142 Lalor, "The First Step—the Felon Club" [1848], in Fogarty, *Lalor*, 84-8, 85.
- 143 Lalor, "Tenant Right Meeting in Tipperary" [1847], in Fogarty, *Lalor*, 47-51, 48.
- 144 Lalor, "Faith," 93.
- 145 Quoted in Priscilla Metscher, *Republicanism and Socialism in Ireland: A Study in the Relationship of Politics and Ideology from the United Irishmen to James Connolly* (Frankfurt-am-Main: P. Lang, 1986), 99.
- 146 "To the Confederate and Repeal Clubs in Ireland" [1848], in Fogarty, *Lalor*, 67-83, 75. Davis had been sympathetic to this intention and had hoped that the local Repeal clubs could be used for the purpose. O'Connell's wish to keep distance from the insurrectionary language of Young Ireland hindered this development but the idea of a sort of unofficial parliament of three hundred remained a fond hope of many.
- 147 Ibid., 76.
- 148 Lalor, "Faith," 96.
- 149 Quoted in Connolly, *Labour in Irish History*, 188.
- 150 Lalor, "Faith," 94.
- 151 Lalor, "Letter to *Felon*," 59.
- 152 Lalor, "Letter to Duffy," 3.
- 153 Connolly, Loc. cit.
- 154 Lalor, "Letter to *Felon*," 59.
- 155 Lalor, "What must be done?" [1848], in Fogarty, *Lalor*, 89-92: 91.
- 156 Lalor, "Letter to *Felon*," 57.
- 157 "Shan Van Vocht," II, 53-6.



# Race, Space, and Politics in Mid-Victorian Ireland: The Ethnologies of Abraham Hume and John McElheran

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**ABSTRACT:** There has been much scholarly debate about the significance and influence of racist thinking in the political and cultural history of nineteenth-century Ireland. With reference to that ongoing historiographical discussion, this paper considers the racial geographies and opposing political motivations of two Irish ethnologists, Abraham Hume and John McElheran, using their racist regimes to query some of the common assumptions that have informed disagreements over the role and reach of racial typecasting in mid-nineteenth-century Ireland. As well as examining in detail the racial imaginaries promulgated by Hume and McElheran, the paper also argues for the importance of situating racist discourse in the spaces in which it was communicated and contested. Further, in highlighting the ways in which Hume and McElheran collapsed together race, class, and religion, the paper troubles the utility of a crisp analytical distinction between those disputed categories.

The racialization of the Irish in the nineteenth century has long been a topic of scholarly investigation and debate. The work of Perry Curtis on caricatures of the Irish in British periodicals was among the earliest examinations of the influence of racial typecasting on the construction of Irish identity in the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> In his *Apes and Angels: The Irishman in Victorian Caricature*, Curtis argued that from the 1840s, images of the Irish in comic newspapers increasingly drew on physiognomy and racial science to portray their subjects as under-developed, misshapen, and dangerous Celtic Calibans. According to Curtis, such portrayals subsequently fed into debates about Home Rule in the 1880s, providing a ready resource for those who wished to argue that the Irish were not capable of self-government.

These claims were quickly challenged by those skeptical of “race” as an explanatory category for understanding Irish political history. Among others, Roy Foster and Sheridan Gilley queried the representativeness of negative portrayals of the Irish in the Victorian period.<sup>2</sup> Class and religion, rather than race, were argued to be of greater importance for understanding British attitudes towards Ireland. It was noted, too, that those attitudes varied considerably and were a dynamic mélange of positive and negative judgments of Irish character and the Irish situation. Responding to these criticisms, other scholars have issued revised statements of Curtis’s arguments, insisting that racialized representations were indeed an important part of Irish political reality in the nineteenth century. In his extensive study of nineteenth-century depictions of the Irish in the British press, Michael de Nie argued that negative stereotypes of the Irish in Britain were remarkably persistent and culturally potent.<sup>3</sup> Luke Gibbons, too, reformulated Curtis’ arguments and suggested that the form of racism experienced by the Irish, while not the same as the virulent kind meted out against African Americans, was analogous to attitudes towards Native Americans. For Gibbons, this “softer” form of racism nevertheless abetted extraordinarily harsh programs of exclusion and extermination.<sup>4</sup> These refashioned versions of Curtis’ thesis have, in turn, been strenuously challenged. In a 2005 article, for example, Gary

Peatling questioned again the influence or “throw” of racial depictions of the Irish on political decision-making and queried the adequacy and accuracy of comparisons drawn between the treatment of, and attitudes towards, Irish and non-white races during the nineteenth century.<sup>5</sup>

Much of this historiographical debate has centered on the relative importance of racialist conceptions of the Irish by “outside” observers. A related body of work on the construction of racial identity among an Irish diaspora has helped to bring into view Irish self-perceptions. Noel Ignatiev’s controversial thesis that “the Irish,” rather than identify with African Americans or other marginalized communities, “became white” to secure better employment and social standing in nineteenth-century America, has attracted considerable attention.<sup>6</sup> John Belchem’s study of Irish Catholics in Liverpool during the long nineteenth century has highlighted some of the negotiations around race that shaped the development of a distinct and dynamic ethnic identity.<sup>7</sup> Attitudes in Ireland towards what were taken to be distinctive racial groups have also been given some attention in recent work examining the anti-imperial rhetoric employed by the Irish nationalist press.<sup>8</sup> This work has demonstrated that sympathy for subjugated peoples elsewhere in the world was an important, if inchoate, component of Irish nationalist discourse.

This paper offers a different and neglected entry point into nineteenth-century discussions about Ireland and race by examining two little-studied Irish ethnologists for whom race was a central explanatory category for understanding Irish culture, society, and politics. Writing in the 1850s, Abraham Hume and John McElheran, although guided by dramatically different scientific and political convictions, argued that Ireland’s population was composed of distinct racial groups. Among other things, their work demonstrates the difficulties involved in assessing the relative importance of a “racial” component in political and cultural debates about Ireland in the mid-Victorian period. Although race was given an analytical priority in the projects pursued by Hume and McElheran, it was inextricably tied to judgments about class and religion.

As well as advancing our understanding of the nature of racial thinking in mid-Victorian Ireland, this paper underlines the importance of geography for comprehending racialized accounts of Ireland, and does so in at least two ways. First, for both racial theorists, constructing a vividly imagined geography of racial difference was a crucial concern. Hume in particular was aware of the methodological and conceptual kinship between mid-Victorian geography and ethnology, and mapping the distribution of racial groups was a key part of his ethnological project.<sup>9</sup> McElheran, by contrast, did not make use of cartography, but he similarly aimed to produce a graphic account of racial difference at a local, regional, and global scale.

Questions of geography are argued to be important in a second sense. Rather than rushing to position the ethnological interventions of McElheran and Hume within a general narrative of the cultural politics of race in nineteenth-century Ireland, care is taken to situate those interventions in the specific intellectual, cultural, and political spaces where they were first articulated and discussed. This is not necessarily to deny the possibility or importance of working towards more general claims. It is to suggest, however, that the historical geographies of nineteenth-century discussions about the racialization of the Irish have to be taken seriously. Doing so will prevent the recalcitrant and radically contingent character of racial discourse from being smoothed over in the heat of historiographical debate.

The paper proceeds by reconstructing in turn the ethnological proposals made by Hume and McElheran. Following this, a closing section will reflect on the differences and similarities between the racialist views of the two ethnologists and highlight the ways in which their projects disrupt some common assumptions about the nature and influence of racialist thought in nineteenth-century Ireland.

### Establishment ethnologies: the racial politics of Abraham Hume

Abraham Hume (1814-1884) was born in Hillsborough, County Down and was educated at the Royal Belfast Academical Institution, Glasgow University, and Trinity College, Dublin. In 1836, he was appointed Head of the English School at Belfast Academy. Five years later he moved to Liverpool, taking up a position at the Mechanics' Institution and then, from 1843 at the Collegiate Institution. In the same year, Hume graduated with a BA from Trinity College and went on to take holy orders in the United Church of England and Ireland, and in 1847 he was appointed Vicar of the Parish Church of Vauxhall, Liverpool.<sup>10</sup> Within his own family, his commitment to the Established Church was a matter of serious concern. His grandfather had been a Presbyterian minister in Hillsborough and his family remained resolutely committed to that tradition.<sup>11</sup> Whatever the impact of this private disagreement, Hume became an outspoken advocate of the Anglican Church in England, Ireland, and beyond.

Hume's interest in science developed early. He excelled in scientific as in other studies while a pupil at the Belfast Academical Institution and was involved as a young man in the Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society. He gained "first honours" in the science department at Trinity College, Dublin on several occasions and, on moving to Liverpool, became a leading member of the town's Literary and Philosophical Society.<sup>12</sup> During his first few years in Liverpool, Hume also became enmeshed in controversies over the anonymously authored evolutionary tract, *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*.<sup>13</sup> For Hume, the book represented a distinct threat to the vital alliance between the Established Church and science, and it contravened scientific principle by propagating inferences not based on fact. The danger of the book also lay in its novel-like qualities, a literary genre that, in Hume's view, encouraged mental atrophy.<sup>14</sup> The same appeal to "bare facts" marked Hume's subsequent work on ethnology and social statistics. These projects also represented the practical outworking of Hume's commitment to consolidating the influence of the Church through scientific study.

Hume's commitment to facts and disavowal of speculative science was a typical rhetorical posture, not least among enthusiasts for what were known as moral statistics. As Theodore Porter has argued, statistics was "in many ways the characteristic social science of the mid-nineteenth century," and its emphasis on the empirical rather than theoretical made it especially attractive to urban reformers.<sup>15</sup> Hume's interest in the statistical analysis of social change, particularly with reference to race and religion, first emerged in 1847 on his appointment as incumbent of "the new district of Vauxhall," a particularly impoverished area of Liverpool. Hume's survey of thousands of households was designed to demonstrate the need for further church extension and additional resources for densely populated urban areas.<sup>16</sup>

In 1852, Hume turned his "eye for facts" back to Ireland and to ethnology. In a paper delivered in Belfast to Section E (Geography and Ethnology) of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, Hume charted the "origin, characteristics and dialect of the people of the counties of Down and Antrim." Hume's presentation ranged widely, but at its heart was an attempt to demonstrate that the counties under study had been a vital influence on the "the destinies of the human race" in both Britain and Ireland. The main agents of this influence were the Anglo-Saxons, which Hume divided into two distinct, because long-separated, branches: the English and "Scotch." Creed, "habit," and surnames were all used to map the distribution of these two sub-racial groups. The English were Episcopalian, the Scottish, Presbyterian. In English districts there was "more comfort and tidiness," and while the "Scotchman" was "often more intelligent than his English neighbour he rarely excelled him in weight of character." It was these two groups that had shaped and civilized Ireland's northeast corner. The third racial element, the "native Irish," was by implication of little consequence in the illustrious history of Antrim and Down.<sup>17</sup>

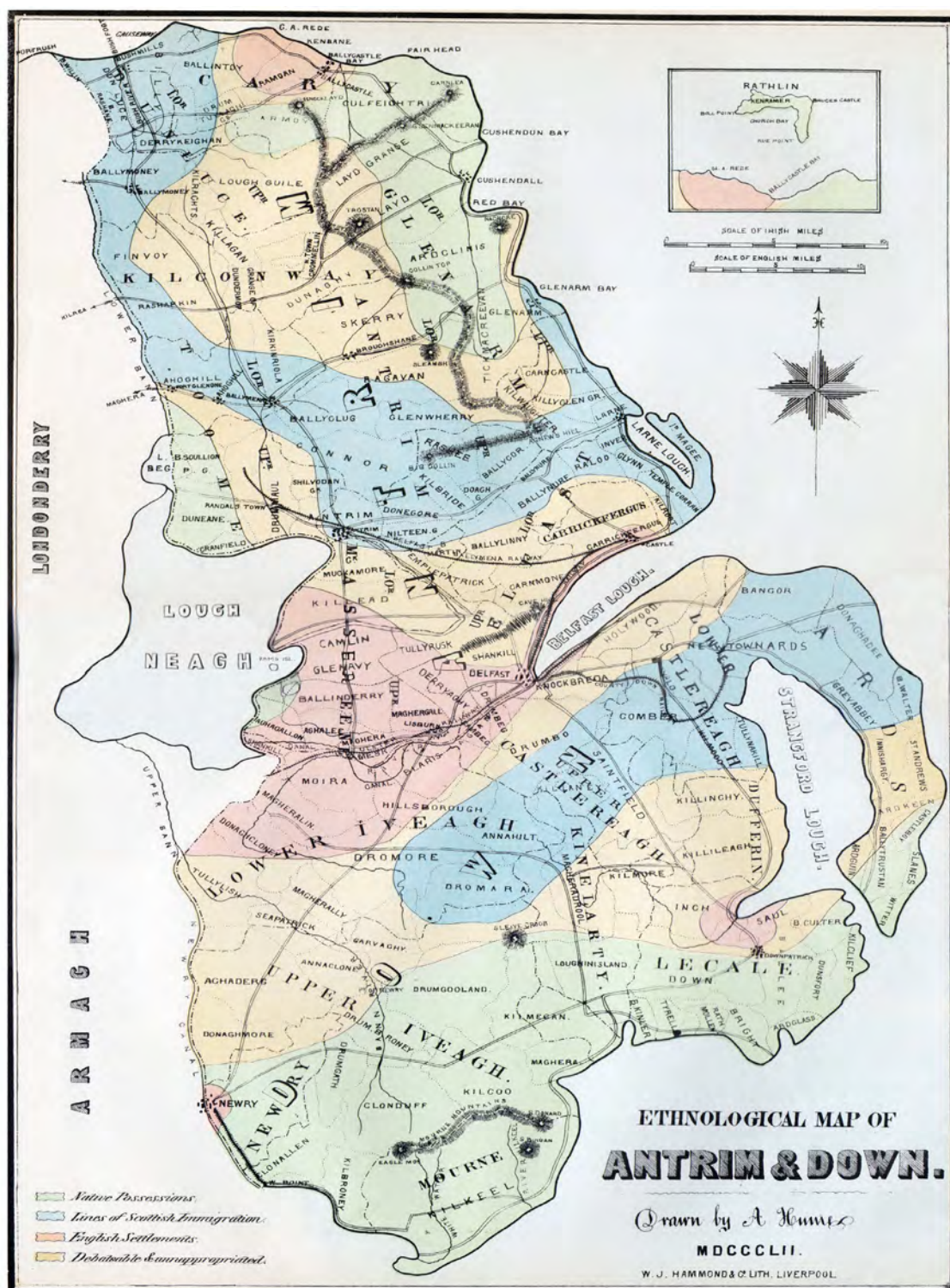
Hume's paper formed the basis of several articles that appeared in the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology* (UJA) between 1853 and 1859. As Hume noted, the UJA had been launched after the British Association's meeting in Belfast and on the back of an exhibition of Irish antiquities organized for that occasion. Edited by the Belfast antiquarian Robert Shipboy MacAdam, it was "open to the discussion of all disputed subjects in Irish archaeology," and ethnology was very much on its agenda. The journal's prospectus noted that "distinct races of men [...] effected settlements in the district, whose lineal descendants remain." It noted, too, that Ulster was distinctive in being, "the last part of Ireland which held out against the English sway," a phrasing that sat uncomfortably with Hume's views of the special significance of Ireland's northern province.<sup>18</sup>

The first of Hume's articles, a much-expanded version of the opening sections of his paper to the British Association, appeared in serial form in the first volume of the UJA. In it Hume set out to describe the topography, physical geography, and social conditions that characterized the counties of Down and Antrim before and shortly after the plantation of Ulster.<sup>19</sup> His detailed chorographical descriptions served a larger purpose and the over-riding aim was to show that Antrim and Down were, like the biblical Canaan, regions of plenty, which had been barren and uncivilized before the arrival of Anglo-Saxon colonizer. The customs and laws of the "native Irish" had prevented any significant development, making the influx of Anglo-Saxon settlers both desirable and necessary. The long-term effect of the plantations, and the later "numerous Protestant accessions," was a province that was no longer Irish in any sense except "geographically." Ulster, in ethnographic terms, had become a "parish" of "Anglo-Saxondom." As a result, "every rood of land" had risen in "moral importance and commercial value."<sup>20</sup> Hume's original intention had been to "show the peculiar locality for each set of people, native and foreign" after the first wave of colonists had arrived and settled. As it turned out, he restricted the final third of his account to English settlements.<sup>21</sup> This, as will become clear, reflected his own concerns to demonstrate the central and civilizing role that the Anglican Church had played not just in Antrim and Down, but also in Ireland as a whole.

In an article published in the UJA three years later, Hume did map in more detail all three of the major racial groups that he believed made up the population of Antrim and Down in the seventeenth century (see Figure 1). Hume's racist chorography of Antrim and Down was strongly colored by the environmentalism that typified much mid-nineteenth-century ethnology. Racial traits were a function of climate and "circumstance," a fact that made necessary an inquiry into the relation between people and "the districts which gave them birth."<sup>25</sup> That did not mean that race was essentially transient or plastic. Racial character, along with education and society, were "powerful operating causes" in human history. The history of the peopling of Ireland also suggested to Hume that some racial groups were more permanent than others. Echoing a widely held view, Hume noted that certain immigrants to Ireland had become "more Irish than the Irish." Others like the "Saxons in England made the name, the language and the institutions of the country their own." The "native Irish," like the Saxon, also seemed to have become a fixed and permanent variety. Hume suggested that living in boggy tracts had "poisoned their energies" and made them little different from "mere animals."<sup>26</sup> Yet it seemed, following Hume's allusions to Ireland's "bog trotters" and "back-of-the-hill folk," that they had become permanently mired in their own inferior state.<sup>27</sup>

Hume's close attention to the ethnology of Down and Antrim later widened out into a consideration of Ireland as a whole. In a long pamphlet published in 1864, Hume analyzed the results of the 1861 census of Ireland in part to defend the record and relevance of the Irish branch of the Established Church. The pamphlet was dedicated to the "advanced radical" MP Lewis Dillwyn in the conviction that Dillwyn's knowledge of the Church in Ireland was not equal to his "zeal [...] for alleged reform."<sup>28</sup> In order to mount a defense against Dillwyn-style calls for





**Figure 1.** Abraham Hume's Ethnological Map of Antrim and Down. Published in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology* 4 (1856) between p.155 and p.156. The green tint represents "native possessions"; the blue tint, "lines of Scottish immigration"; the pink tint, "English settlements"; and the yellow tint, "debatable and un-appropriated."

disestablishment, Hume catalogued the relative distribution of Ireland's three main religious groupings: Roman Catholics, members of the Established Church, and Presbyterians. This demonstrated that, while Roman Catholics were by far the largest group, the Established Church was best placed to "leaven" Irish society, given its presence across the entire island. To remove it, or to lessen its influence, would be to abandon Ireland to social decay and wholesale political rebellion. The epigraph chosen for Hume's pamphlet—lines from Thomas Moore's poem "Erin, oh Erin"—was not ironic despite the enthusiasm for Moore's verse among Irish nationalists. Hume clearly believed that Ireland would indeed "shine out when the proudest shall fade," due to the civilizing influence of the Established Church.<sup>29</sup>

For all the importance of religion in Hume's analysis, it is clear that race, too, played a significant role. As we have seen, it had long been Hume's conviction that in Ireland race and religion were interchangeable.<sup>30</sup> The English Saxons were members of the Established Church, the Scottish Saxons were Presbyterians, and the Irish Celts were overwhelmingly Roman Catholic. It was the Celtic Catholics—or "the wretched kerne of the south and west"—who were an "impediment to improvement," and not simply because they owed allegiance to a "foreign potentate."<sup>31</sup> In racial terms, they were constitutionally unsuited to occupations much beyond the unskilled and menial. To illustrate this, Hume constructed from census results a "social pyramid" that demonstrated, to his satisfaction, that "in Ireland there are vocations which are specially Roman Catholic or Celtic."<sup>32</sup> Ireland's Protestant Saxons, on the other hand, were singularly suited to occupations concerned with property, law, and government. The English Saxons in particular were the "cream of the Irish milk pot" and had retained the "emerald gem" for the crown of Great Britain.<sup>33</sup> Hume summarized his findings as follows: in Ireland "ethnology and creed on the one hand illustrate and are illustrated by occupation and social grade on the other."<sup>34</sup>

Hume's racial analysis surfaced more strongly still in his conclusion. There, he attacked advocates of the "equality of human nature" (which, he announced, "only had to be distinctly stated to be universally denied") and, by analogy with the unthinkable idea of "surrender[ing] supreme power" to the slave populations of South Carolina and Mississippi, argued against acceding to Irish demands for self-rule. Like emancipated slaves, the Irish—though not "negroes"—were just as far from the moral, intellectual, and social maturity exhibited by Protestant Saxons.<sup>35</sup> The demanding task at hand was, "as far as possible," to bring them up to the Saxon level.<sup>36</sup>

Hume's argument that the Celtic race in Ireland was not beyond improvement but remained far from the Saxon stage of development made him note, further, that the "great difficulty" in Ireland for the English Church and State was not the "mild, docile and gentle" Celt but "Romanized Normans exported from England" who had been "perverted" from their original Protestant faith.<sup>37</sup> Racially superior to their Celtic co-religionists, such converts to Roman Catholicism could mount a substantial challenge to the Anglo-Saxon clergyman intent on winning Ireland back to the ancient and "ante-papal" (even anti-papal) faith of Saint Patrick.<sup>38</sup>

Among other things, Hume's racially charged religious geography of Ireland highlighted the pivotal role of Anglican outposts in otherwise Celto-Catholic areas. This ethno-religious vision, buttressed by the cartographic rhetoric of double spread maps, provided the basis for a religious geopolitics readily mobilized to serve a more global remit. The parishes of many parts of Ireland were, for Hume, more like remote mission stations than the settled and secure benefices of England. Reflecting on the challenges to "clerical labour" in ten parishes in western Connaught, Hume brought to mind "a foreign land" and, to find an equivalent example, pointed to the work of the government chaplain of Lima, Peru.<sup>39</sup>

As it turned out, the allusion to South America was particularly appropriate. Three years after his analysis of the 1861 census, Hume acted as a "surveyor" for the South American Missionary Society. His "tour" of South America mapped out a moral geography of religious



toleration with Chile proving to be the most receptive to Anglican missions and the establishment of Protestant communities. The explanation lay in a long history of interaction with Europeans in general and "the English" in particular.<sup>40</sup> As well as mapping the relative receptivity of the continent to Protestant mission, Hume's survey also helped determine "centres for action" most suitable for basing communities of English missionaries.<sup>41</sup>

Although Hume imported his racist views into his work on Christian missions, it is important to note that he did not do this consistently or in a sustained way. Strikingly, his many studies of the religious geography of Liverpool make little or no reference to racial concerns.<sup>42</sup> This was in spite of the fact that Hume was more aware than most of the large numbers of Irish Catholics residing in Liverpool. Whatever the reasons for this silence, it is clear that Ireland remained for Hume the geographical pivot for his ethnographical inquiries. Ireland, not England, provided the ethnological facts on which to base a defense of the Established Church of England and, especially, Ireland.

### **John McElheran and the transcendental Celt**

On the same day in September 1852 that Abraham Hume delivered his paper to the Geography and Ethnology Section of the British Association on the peoples of Antrim and Down, a Belfast surgeon, John McElheran (d. 1859), penned a letter addressed to the Association's ethnologists. In it he attacked the "popular theory that England is Anglo-Saxon, and therefore great." The premise that England was Anglo-Saxon was, McElheran insisted, entirely mistaken. The Saxon invasion did not exterminate the Celtic Britons but was, instead, absorbed by the indigenous and superior Celts. Over the subsequent centuries "Celtic men," far from remaining "cooped up in corners," became the backbone of Britain. Shakespeare, it turns out, was a "good specimen" of the Celtic character. The only pure Saxons left were the miners of the North-East of England, set apart by their "complexions, features and general structures." The rest of the population shaded towards the Celtic type. These claims were made on the back of a "complexion census" McElheran had undertaken over a period of ten months in various British towns and cities. Admitting the small sample size of his own surveys, McElheran ended his epistle by calling the Association to sponsor an inquiry into Britain's racial makeup. The end result would not only be a boon for ethnological science, but would also "break down the prejudices and invidious distinctions of race."<sup>43</sup>

McElheran's letter appeared several days later in the pages of the *Northern Whig*, a leading Belfast newspaper dedicated to liberal and reformist causes. It was also reprinted in the Dublin-based and politically nationalist *Freeman's Journal*. Beyond that, however, it attracted little attention, and less than a month later McElheran tried again to garner public interest in his subversive ethnological theories. In a letter published in the *Times*, McElheran launched a stinging assault on the "Saxon lie" promulgated by the newspaper at the expense of the downtrodden Celt. Once again, McElheran announced that Saxons were in a diminishing minority. Against a dominant view, McElheran asserted that "the greatest men who adorn English and Scottish history had Celtic characteristics." What was more, the "god-like Anglo-Saxon" that the *Times* had "hawked around the world as an object of worship" was the product of an "infidel material theory of race" that was to blame for "assassinations and oppression in Ireland" and for sectarianism everywhere.<sup>44</sup>

On this occasion, McElheran's views prompted widespread discussion. The *Times* responded at length to McElheran's "black and thick" abuse, dismissing the accusation that it had ever promoted the idea that the English were Saxon. It was, in fact, the mixed character of the English-born cosmopolites that made them versatile, practical, and virtuous. If the term "Saxon" had been employed by the *Times* writers, it was for the "settlers in Ulster" or "importations

from the Lowlands of Scotland." In the final analysis, it was only the "average Irishman" who approached racial purity, being "by universal admission a Celt."<sup>45</sup>

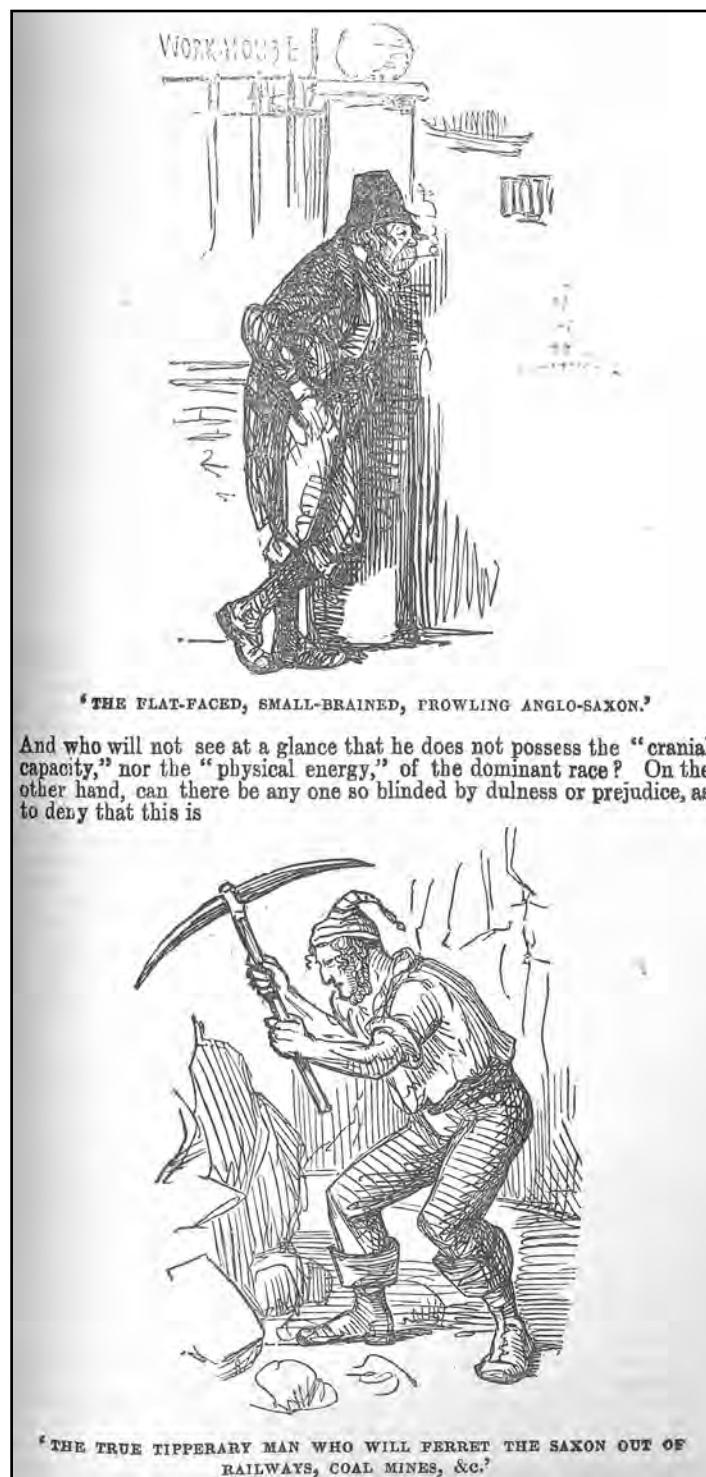
Other publications picked up on the exchange and pronounced their own judgments. *Punch* reprinted choice quotes from McElheran's letter, illustrating them with sketches of a "small-brained, prowling Anglo-Saxon" and a "true Tipperary man" (see Figure 2).<sup>46</sup> For the *Punch* writer and artist, no further comment was needed—McElheran's reversal of stereotypes was patently absurd. The *Belfast Newsletter*, a paper sympathetic to the Protestant Establishment, dismissed McElheran's imagined "triumph over the anti-Celtic ethnologists of the London press" and presented him as "the most fatal specimen of the Celt that the enemies of that race could possibly seize upon as an illustration of his arguments."<sup>47</sup> In complete contrast, a number of Irish nationalist newspapers trumpeted McElheran's letter as a glorious triumph. The *Freeman's Journal* declared that the letter had "hit the raw" and forced from the *Times* a "pettifogging" denial that it had ever suggested that the English were Saxon, despite the "thousand living evidences in type of his own columns against him."<sup>48</sup> The *Tipperary Free Press* called the *Times* response a "snivelling apology" made from a "lying lip" and praised McElheran's matchless rhetorical prowess.<sup>49</sup>

McElheran's letter to the *Times* and the responses to it have been previously noted and discussed. Conor Carville describes McElheran's ethnological interventions in 1852 as evincing a "spectral ethnicity" that combined a "realist" or scientific posture with a "gothic" (but manifestly not, for McElheran, Gothic) fascination with the unreal. Drawing on the work of Homi Bhabha, Carville presents McElheran's text as a hybrid discourse uneasily moving between the real and unreal and containing within its own insistence on an essentialized Celtic identity an "occult" recognition of a more contingent and non-essential account of cultural difference.<sup>50</sup> Although Carville's reading of McElheran's pamphlet is provocative and suggestive, it entirely neglects the scientific racialism that provided McElheran with the material and methods to construct his hybrid and serial texts on racial identity. Robert Young's account, less preoccupied with subtle postcolonial inflections, sets McElheran's racialism in scientific context and reconstructs in detail his dispute with the *Times*.<sup>51</sup> What is missing from both Young and Carville's analysis is any reference to McElheran's political allegiances. Arguably, it was these more than anything else that motivated and molded his ethnological enunciations.

McElheran's place of birth and early education are not known.<sup>52</sup> What is known is that he was educated in Edinburgh and gained a license from the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh in August 1845.<sup>53</sup> It is likely, then, that it was in Edinburgh that McElheran first encountered the racial theories of the maverick anatomist, Robert Knox.<sup>54</sup> But wherever the encounter occurred, it is clear that Knox was the primary influence on McElheran's understanding of racial difference. For McElheran, as for Knox, races, once formed by a process of degeneration and divergence from an original type, became permanent. Such degeneration was not induced by the environment but rather by the interplay between material and "vital" causes that produced all animal forms. Although McElheran emphasized the original unity of the human races—a scientific fact that for McElheran confirmed the scriptural fact of an original and perfect human couple—this monogenism did not move him far from Knox's radical racial theory. In emphasizing an anti-progressivist and anti-environmentalist account of racial development and in stressing race as a fixed and fundamental feature of human history, McElheran cleaved closely to the theoretical claims and core categories of Knox's racialism.<sup>55</sup>

The incongruity of McElheran's enthusiasm for Knox's racialism is, on first examination, striking. It is often noted that Knox was virulently anti-Celtic.<sup>56</sup> But he could also be scurrilously anti-Saxon. Knox, for all his apparent championing of Saxon supremacy, disavowed a progressive and hierarchical understanding of race. Knox's outbursts against Celtic despotism and militarism and his encomiums on the superior qualities of the Saxon were frequently followed by contrasting





**Figure 2.** A sketch in *Punch* satirizing McElheran's racial schemata. The "Anglo-Saxon" resembles commonplace caricatures of the Irish. The "Tipperary man" is depicted as a miner and an ethnologist, doubly disrupting McElheran's claim that the most degraded racial type was found among English colliers. Among other things, the sketches rendered McElheran's "reverse ethnology" as itself akin to caricature.

evaluations that destabilized the presumption of hierarchy. One example is Knox's arresting claim that his own racial theory, based as it was on the *Naturphilosophie* of German "Slavonians" such as Oken, Goethe, and Spix, could never have been "imagined" or even understood by a Saxon.<sup>57</sup> More relevant for McElheran was Knox's highly unstable and paradoxical account of the Celt and the Saxon.

Not surprisingly, McElheran took full advantage of Knox's strategic reversals by quoting at length his teacher's descriptions of a rapacious and brutally selfish Saxon race. McElheran also exploited the political convictions that informed Knox's reflections on racial types. Knox's republicanism and radicalism—along with his mordant and magniloquent style—were readily turned against the British imperial system that McElheran blamed for Ireland's misfortunes. Indeed, Knox's work supplied pithy descriptions of Saxon misrule in Ireland. The island, Knox noted, had long suffered from political enslavement and the "see-saw, diverting buffoonery and deplorable hypocrisy" of English rule.<sup>58</sup> For Knox, that was fully to be expected. Saxons were, by nature, cold, calculating, and mercenary.<sup>59</sup> For that reason, it was inevitable that the Saxon, driven by an insatiable appetite for accumulating territory, would drive out the Celts from Ireland. Knox's discourse was, then, rabidly dialectical, even eristic, and it provided a deliciously quotable resource for pursuing opposite political and ethnological programs.<sup>60</sup>

McElheran's career as a political agitator began shortly after he established a surgical practice in Hercules Place, a quarter of Belfast better known for its concentration of Catholic butchers and cattle traders.<sup>61</sup> By his own admission, McElheran's practice was not particularly successful and, in any case, he spent a good deal of time away from Belfast. In 1848, McElheran lent some support to the failed rebellion mounted by the Young Irelanders, but his political involvement and public profile dramatically increased after his letter to the *Times*.<sup>62</sup> Thereafter, it was Dublin rather than Belfast that became the main center of his politicking and lecturing. As well as speaking at the Dublin Mechanic's Institute, McElheran involved himself in the Irish Tenant League, the Religious Equality Conference, the labor movement, and Robert Cane's Celtic Union. His lecturing took him to Tuam (where he banqueted with the patriot Archbishop John MacHale) and, later, to Liverpool.<sup>63</sup> His championing of labor rights and universal franchise brought him into contact with the Labour Parliament in Manchester and in March 1854, along with Karl Marx, he was elected an honorary member of that short-lived "alternative parliament."<sup>64</sup> Perhaps most significantly, however, in January 1854 McElheran presided over a "national banquet" in Dublin to celebrate the safe arrival to New York of the exiled Young Irishman, John Mitchel, a public act that caused the *Belfast Newsletter* to declare that "the mantel of Mitchel has surely fallen [...] on the shoulders of McElheran [...] the quondam Belfast surgeon apothecary."<sup>65</sup>

Even when adopting the posture of a detached observer of human racial variety, McElheran closely aligned his ethnological descriptions with his political predilections. In a paper published in the *UJA* in 1854, McElheran presented an ethnological sketch of the Claddagh, a small fishing community near Galway. McElheran's choice of field site for his ethnographical investigations was carefully considered. The Claddagh had been frequently described by travel writers on Irish tours and was widely regarded as an ethnological curiosity. Interpretations varied, with some observers describing the villagers of the Claddagh as self-sufficient, industrious, and well ordered, even if primitive and superstitious.<sup>66</sup> Others painted an altogether darker picture of a backward and recalcitrant population resistant to progress and living in filth and squalor.<sup>67</sup> McElheran shared the view of the villagers as primitive but regretted the gradual disappearance of their superstitions, finding in them echoes of noble (if not yet Christian) ancient beliefs and practices. Against the dominant view that the Claddagh residents were of Spanish or mixed descent, McElheran insisted that they were of "the most ancient Celtic type." He also was careful to note that the reported indifference to progress was now on the ebb and that the people of the

Claddagh were on the cusp of making a signal contribution to the advance of modern civilization. McElheran opened his paper by reminding his readers that the Claddagh was the “projected site of the American packet station,” thus connecting his observations to long-standing efforts to transform Galway into a major port city for transferring American exports to Europe. The current “primitive inhabitants” of the village may, McElheran surmised, be the forebears of the “merchant princes” of a “great commercial city connecting the old and new worlds.”<sup>68</sup> Their physical appearance was in contrast to that of the “Saxon slaves,” who were marked out by their “heavy gait, blurred features, and dark eye.”<sup>69</sup> McElheran’s conclusion was that the Claddagh fishing folk “had within them the elements of a great people” and were of the “same race as are found in Belfast and Glasgow.”<sup>70</sup>

McElheran’s career in Ireland as an ethnologist and Mitchelite nationalist was cut short in May 1854 with his move to New York.<sup>71</sup> It is likely that his outspoken support for Mitchel was, in part at least, behind his move, but he may also have been at risk of conviction, under the Treason-Felony Act (1848), for remarks in a lecture on “loyalty” to the Dublin Mechanics’ Institution shortly after the visit of Queen Victoria to Ireland in September 1853.<sup>72</sup> Whatever the reasons for his relocation, McElheran continued to use ethnology to further an Irish nationalist cause.

A little over two years after his arrival in New York, McElheran addressed the city’s Academy of Medicine on the subject of the “comparative anatomy of the human crania.”<sup>73</sup> The paper later appeared in full in the *New York Journal of Medicine*, and here McElheran’s reliance on the “transcendental doctrines” of Robert Knox came to the fore.<sup>74</sup> Following Knox, McElheran asserted that human racial varieties were caused by “permanent arrestments of development.” Even so, he gave Knox’s transcendental racialism his own idiosyncratic formulation arguing that the “original unity” of the human type diverged and degraded towards “herbivorous” and “carnivorous” varieties. More decisively, he argued against Knox that the Celtic race exhibited the “highest range of development.” This meant it was possible to observe within Celtic populations “forms analogous to the types of all other races.” For all that, the “lowest Celts retained their superiority over the highest Goths and Negroes” due to “differently formed brains.”<sup>75</sup> To lend authority to his revised hierarchical ordering, McElheran summarily dismissed the work of the noted ethnologists, Samuel George Morton, Petrus Camper, and Johann Friedrich Blumenbach. According to McElheran, the crude measurements of a Morton, Camper, or Blumenbach could not capture the subtle “lines of difference” that marked out different racial varieties. Using his own more discerning eye, McElheran had examined Morton’s skulls collections more than “fifty times,” a laborious exercise contrasting with that of the “Anglo-Saxon theorists who found their own superiority in five or six skulls.”<sup>76</sup> Through the course of his lecture, McElheran redefined the meaning of the term “Celtic” from one that described a discrete and locatable population to a human type distinguished by brain anatomy and the fine details of cranial morphology. The conclusion of McElheran’s lecture, if not his article, was to persuade his audience that the “true American type is [...] a pure bred Celtic race” as testified by “their language, their physique and impulsive, versatile genius.” In a final flourish, McElheran used his own sketches of Celtic types to demonstrate that the “typical American, such as Washington, Jackson, Taylor, Webster,” resembled them exactly.<sup>77</sup>

As well as presenting his anti-Saxon message to learned audiences, McElheran made the most of more popular media. In a series of articles published in the Irish-Catholic newspaper, the *Boston Pilot*, McElheran launched an all-out assault on the “Anglomania” of the scientific and public press in Britain and North America.<sup>78</sup> These articles formed the mainstay of his book, *The Condition of Women and Children among the Celtic, Gothic and Other Nations*, published in Boston in 1858 by Patrick Donahoe, the *Pilot*’s proprietor and leading sponsor of Catholic literature in North America. The book’s condemnation of Saxonism was, if anything, more shrill and sensationalist

than McElheran's previous proclamations. The thesis that "nations were and are barbarous and unjust, and cruel to woman in proportion to their distance from the Celtic group" was pursued relentlessly and at the expense of the "Anglo-Saxon" or "Gothic" race, descended as it was from "the outer rind of humanity in Northern Europe."<sup>79</sup> McElheran made the most of the surrounding disputes over race, slavery, and the American future to drive home his anti-Saxon message. In McElheran's makeshift racial hierarchy, "the Negro surpasses the Saxon in all the attributes that distinguish the man and the brute." Without defending the actions of American slave owners, McElheran suggested that "the negro woman and child under Celtic control in America is superior to the Saxon woman and child under the English poor law guardian." That ranking remained true despite the fact that the "Negro" was "naturally slavish and feeble-minded." McElheran also detected Saxon influence behind the hypocrisy of British abolitionism, motivated as it was by a desire to secure "a monopoly of slave labor in India."<sup>80</sup> Moreover, Americans, unlike British employers of female mineworkers or child laborers, "did not mock their slaves by telling them they were free."<sup>81</sup> All of this simply confirmed for McElheran that the root cause of Ireland's distress and disadvantage was the brutal history of Saxon misrule and the influence of Saxon-inspired political economy, "the practical expression of the cold-blooded, rationalistic [...] instinct of the Gothic race."<sup>82</sup> The only solution for Ireland was "separation from beastly, perfidious Albion."<sup>83</sup> The only hope for America lay with the "talent and energy" of the virtuous, freedom-loving Celtic race.<sup>84</sup>

Two very different reviews of McElheran's book illustrate its political bearings and unstable meanings. The first appeared in the Dublin-based *Nation*, in November 1858. The review rehearsed the pre-history of McElheran's latest and longest dissection and deconstruction of Saxon supremacy. McElheran, "a quiet professor of medical science in the busy town of Belfast," had applied his scalpel to "this wonderful demi-god," the Saxon, and exposed his real qualities.<sup>85</sup> The "superstructure of prejudice" erected and defended by the *Times* had fallen to the ground "on the first volley of hard facts."<sup>86</sup> Six years later, McElheran had produced a book that provided "ready weapons" against gross Saxonism. For the *Nation's* reviewer, every sentence of McElheran's book stood "perfect, round and ready to be taken with scarcely diminished force as a stone to [...] demolish for ever some Anglo-Saxon falsehood or another."<sup>87</sup> Among the most important effects of McElheran's text was to decenter and demote the Saxon-centric account of world affairs that lay behind England's empire. In the long view provided by McElheran, the idea that London lay at "the centre of the inhabitable earth" and that it was the destiny of the English race to "rule the world" was declared preposterous. It was, instead the "Celtic centre," which in ancient times stretched "from Asia Minor, along the northern shores of the Mediterranean into Erin," that would, in time, guide and bless all nations with "light, and power and law." Everything, announced the reviewer, "in history, in geography and in ethnology tends to the same point."<sup>88</sup>

The second review appeared some months later in the pages of *Brownson's Quarterly Review*, a periodical edited by the leading American Catholic apologist, Orestes Augustus Brownson. McElheran's book – which Brownson judged "not even worth the labor of a serious refutation" – provided a useful foil for defending Brownson's own views on the connections between race, religion, and American politics.<sup>89</sup> What Brownson found particularly bothersome about McElheran's argument was the assumption that the Celtic race was naturally inclined to be Catholic whereas the propensity of the Saxon race was towards Protestantism and its more heretical offshoots. For Brownson this was, in its practical and political import if not theoretical pretensions, rank polygenism, a doctrine that he deemed utterly incompatible with Christianity and American democracy.<sup>90</sup> Brownson's primary concern was to persuade his fellow American citizens that Catholicism was neither an enemy of free states nor a friend of despotism. McElheran, he argued, militated against this aim and reduced American Catholics to a "foreign colony" cut



off from the task of building a great nation. In making these judgments, Brownson sharpened a tension that McElheran constantly negotiated throughout his work on the Celtic race. On the one hand McElheran's argument, following Knox, was based on the premise that "no race ever changes its radical character." The Celtic race was the "least fallen," the Saxon the most degenerate. On the other hand, the "divine mission" given to the Celtic race was to "save the rest of mankind" by spreading the Christian message. McElheran, in a bid for consistency, nowhere denied that this was possible but, at the same time, stressed that "no converted nation made slower progress in Christianity than the Anglo-Saxons."<sup>91</sup>

Brownson's review marked the end of McElheran's career as the champion of the Celtic race. A few months after McElheran's book was published, notices recording his death in London of heart disease appeared in the *Belfast Newsletter* and the *Freeman's Journal*.<sup>92</sup> His legacy within British ethnology was slight. The Scottish ethnologist Daniel Wilson briefly referred to his work only to dismiss it as "embittered by the narrowest spirit of national prejudice," a criticism he was equally keen to level at the "Teutonic partisan" John Pinkerton.<sup>93</sup> In contrast, ten years after his death, the *Nation* found confirmation for McElheran's thesis that the majority of Britain's population had Celtic origins in the ethnological observations of Thomas Henry Huxley. Yet unlike Huxley, but in keeping with McElheran, the *Nation's* editorialist insisted that the Irish, in being purely Celtic, were "ethnologically different from England." The Irish thus required a different form of government and, under the sway of English rule, remained a "Prometheus in chains," a superior race bound by political slavery.<sup>94</sup> This provided a neat summary of the aggressively polemical "ethno-nationalism" that McElheran had championed for nearly a decade in Ireland, Britain, and North America.

### Intimate ethnologies and global imaginaries

In early September 1852, Hume and McElheran were both in Belfast to witness the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. Hume, on the committee of Section E, was formally involved. McElheran did not participate in an official capacity but addressed members of the Association via the pages of the *Northern Whig*. Over the next few years, both men published on Irish ethnology in the pages of the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*. Such proximity in space and in print did nothing to ameliorate the intense oppositions found between Hume's environmentalist racialism and McElheran's "transcendental" account of racial difference. Yet for all those evident differences, it is worth noting that Hume and McElheran shared certain deep-seated sensibilities and intellectual habits of thought.

In the first place, the ethnologies of both Hume and McElheran were intimately related to their own self-perceptions. In 1845, Hume had laboriously put together an "illustrated pedigree" of his own family that traced their ancestry back to a Saxon King and to nobility resident in the Scottish border region.<sup>95</sup> According to an influential theory promoted by a number of British ethnologists, being a descendent of the lowland Scots placed Hume within a pure Saxon line.<sup>96</sup> Hume was aware of this, noting in a later article that "rich Saxons" had fled north into the Scottish border region during the reign of William the Conqueror and thoroughly Saxonized the district.<sup>97</sup>

Notably, among the groups that McElheran placed on the "outer rind" of humanity was the "lousy" Saxon race of the Scottish lowlands, "a very filthy people" who shared none of the virtues of the Celtic Highlander.<sup>98</sup> Not surprisingly, then, McElheran—self-described as a "rough northerner"—worked to establish his own distinctly Celtic pedigree. Though he did not, as far as we know, conduct the kind of painstaking genealogical research carried out by Hume, he did confirm that his surname connected him directly to "his Irish speaking friends in the Glens of Antrim." His "honourable patronymic," pronounced, he suggested, "M'Gil Kerin" by native Irish

speakers, placed his ancestry close to the ruins of St. Kerin's chapel in north Antrim.<sup>99</sup> This rooted him to a Celtic and Catholic past and linked him with a living community widely acknowledged to be composed of "native Irish."<sup>100</sup>

In the second place, Hume and McElheran both scaled up their ethnological theories to produce a global racial geography and, in so doing, provided a basis for a form of ethnic colonialism. McElheran, for example, pictured the populated earth as,

composed of realms, one Mediterranean, nursing the original [Celtic] tree, bearing the loveliest flowers, and producing the finest fruits; each of the other realms bears a slip of the old tree, transplanted and grown into a tree, with its branches, and the great tree of each realm is weaker and coarser the farther it has been transplanted; but, being transplanted, its new growth or type is permanent. But the old tree still grows on, and increases, and casts its branches over the earth, killing out the weaker trees—in other words, the original old race is encroaching upon all other races.<sup>101</sup>

In sketching this appropriately biological, but also biblical image, McElheran licensed a version of the "anti-colonial colonialism" of Robert Knox with the Celt settling in other parts of the world not to annex them for Ireland, but to create independent nations animated by the "spark" of Celtic genius.<sup>102</sup> Certainly, there was little space in McElheran's globalized racial geography for ethnic groups such as the "red men of America," except as "savages" akin to the degraded Saxon and unlikely to survive the inexorable growth of a transnational "Celtica."<sup>103</sup>

Hume, too, projected his racialist geography of Ireland onto global spaces. In his descriptions of South America he evoked a global region that, at a continental scale, paralleled Ireland in being over-shadowed by a "corrupt Christian faith" (Roman Catholicism) and populated, in the main, by benighted "natives." His reports of his trip to South America suggest that he saw the hope of the continent resting in the hands of well-constituted missionaries who could, like the Saxons in Ireland, resist the "relaxing effects of the climate" and avoid the vices of idleness and apathy that beset the "natives."<sup>104</sup> Hume also made clear that these primitive peoples of South America were in a much earlier stage of human development. In keeping with this traditional stadial understanding of human history and geography, Hume suggested that innate racial differences had been exaggerated. The whole world was, after all, "kin."<sup>105</sup> Even so, tellingly imagining the globe as a "single country," Hume found within its borders human inhabitants like the "Digger Indians" of California who lived in "artificial structures scarcely more pretentious than that constructed by the gorilla." Such groups were on "the lowest round in the ladder which conducts to platform of civilization."<sup>106</sup> It was this "softer" racialism that underwrote Hume's global vision of strategically located "centres of action" that he took to be essential for advancing religious and economic enlightenment.

However the similarities and differences between Hume and McElheran are parsed, it is clear that neither is easily placed within scholarly debates about the racialization of the Irish. It might be suggested, for example, that McElheran's racialist tracts were a classic form of mimicry, aping and reversing the more virulent representations of the Irish race found in British ethnological and popular discourse and thus confirming the prevalence and influence of those damaging depictions. Whether or not that is a plausible way to read McElheran's racialist tracts, it hardly tells the whole story. McElheran found in Knox's "transcendental" racialism habits of thought and political sentiments useful for constructing ethnological descriptions that cannot be easily reduced to an act of intellectual mimicry. McElheran's transcendental Celticism lent support to an "ethnic" nationalism and a "diasporic imperialism" that was warmly received in

certain Irish nationalist circles. This suggests that more attention needs to be given to the ways in which Knox-style racist thought was utilized in support of a form of Irish (trans)nationalism that has sometimes been styled “civic” rather than “ethnic.”

Hume, too, disrupts certain common assumptions. His monogenism and environmentalism—two connected intellectual convictions that are frequently aligned with a critique of racist thinking—were combined with an understanding of race that, in its political implications, differed little from more “innatist” and polygenist accounts of racial difference. That he used this vigorous form of racism for political purposes sits uncomfortably with suggestions that race was a category of little importance in Irish Protestant and unionist discourse. Hume’s conservative unionism and, more particularly, his unyielding support for the Established Church did not make him atypical even if it set him apart from the more liberal strands of unionism that found significant support among Ulster Presbyterians. Hume’s case suggests that more needs to be done to track the importance of race as an explanatory or descriptive category within different strands of unionist thought in mid-Victorian Ireland.

Taken together, the ethnological interventions of Hume and McElheran form a rather unpalatable episode in the “racialization of the Irish” during the nineteenth century. Neither provides ready material for scoring historiographical points. But both point to the “cross-party” allure of racial categorization in mid-Victorian Ireland, and both highlight the influence of contingent geographical circumstances in shaping the lineaments and unedifying legacies of racist discourse.

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- 100 Hume, "Ethnology," (see n. 22). See, for example, Hume's ethnological map of Antrim and Down, an insert in reference.
- 101 McElheran, "General Development," (see n. 73, p. 50).
- 102 Young, *English Ethnicity*, (see n. 49, p. 86). On Knox's "anti-colonial colonialism," or "diasporic imperialism," see reference.
- 103 McElheran, *Condition*, (see n. 75, p. 19-26); McElheran, *Condition*, (see n. 75, p. 17). For references to the similarities between "red Indians" and "Saxons" see first reference. On "Celtica" see second reference.
- 104 Hume, *Report*, (see n. 38, p. 25; n. 36).
- 105 Abraham Hume, "Illustrations of British Antiquities Derived from Objects Found in South America," *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* (1868): 318.
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# ***Erin's Hope, Irish Blood and Indefeasible Allegiance: Reconfiguring Citizenship and Nationalism in an Era of Increased Mobility***

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**ABSTRACT:** In the wake of the 1867 Rising—a failed attempt to establish an Irish Republic by force—a ship named the *Erin's Hope* delivered to Ireland a number of Irish-American officers whose objective was to continue the fight. They were arrested immediately, and despite their protestations, charged as British subjects with treason-felony against the Queen. This paper illuminates their plight, the manner in which they attempted to reframe their predicament, and how the UK and the US responded legislatively to such troublesome mobility during a period when Ireland was governed in a draconian fashion and Irish nationalism was stronger amongst the Diaspora overseas. This case study is considered as historical evidence not only of how such concepts as subjecthood, citizenship, expatriation, and naturalization were reconfigured in an era of increased mobility, but also of how Irishness came to be determined by descent, the latter of which is a legacy of colonialism in need of redress in the postcolonial present.

In 2004, a citizenship referendum was passed in the Republic of Ireland in which an overwhelming majority voted in favor of the removal of the constitutional entitlement of persons born on the island of Ireland to become Irish citizens. The resulting amendment to the Constitution ensured that from January 1, 2005, citizenship could be conferred only if at least one parent was either an Irish or British citizen, or determined to be legally resident in the island of Ireland for at least three of the four years preceding the birth. Meanwhile, Irish citizenship also continues to be conferred to adults who are of good character and who meet lengthy legal residency requirements; however, discretion with regards to the latter is exercised by the Minister for Justice and Equality in the case of non-national relatives of Irish citizens and asylum seekers in particular.

Additionally, while it is quite possible to reside on the island of Ireland, to be an Irish citizen and yet not be in possession of an Irish passport (this being more likely among the population of the Republic of Ireland in particular), for those individuals living abroad and who consider themselves Irish, the acquisition of an Irish passport is the principal means by which Irish citizenship can be attained. While Irish citizenship is no longer automatically guaranteed to persons born on the island of Ireland, it continues to be conferred therefore by way of the issuing of passports to individuals around the world, including those *not born* on the island—so long as either one parent is an Irish citizen at the time of birth, or it can be proven that a parent or a grandparent was born on the island. Once the necessary documentation is validated by the nearest embassy or consulate and all applicable fees paid, the birth is subsequently entered into a Foreign Births Register, and an Irish passport issued to the person in question. So long as this occurs before the birth of the next generation, an Irish passport (and therefore citizenship) can conceivably be passed down in perpetuity according to descent, with said persons never being



resident on the island of Ireland.<sup>1</sup> Determining how many such individuals exist is difficult, certainly the fourteen percent of all Irish passport holders who were not resident on the island in 2012 would not all fall into this particular category, yet the fact that the category exists at all—that descent is an official means by which citizenship is unproblematically granted—is arguably a significant issue given the reality of modern Irish society.<sup>2</sup>

Significantly, the citizenship referendum passed amidst a period of unprecedented immigration into Ireland. For example, between 2002 and 2006, the number of non-Irish nationals living in the state increased from 7 percent to 11 percent of the population.<sup>3</sup> Its passing was associated with concerns in particular over “citizenship tourism,” in other words a perceived threat to the state posed by pregnant foreign national women initially seeking asylum, only to subsequently seek “leave to remain” in the state, following the birth of their Irish citizen child. In their extensive discussion of the recent changes to Irish citizenship law, Alan White and Mary Gilmartin argue that they illustrate how dominant understandings of the relationship between a people and a place are articulated in the legal realm, with citizenship wielded as a tool of inclusion and exclusion by those harnessing the power of the state.<sup>4</sup> As Gilmartin points out, Ireland is not unique in this regard, especially in perceiving mobile migrant bodies to be a threat to the state, with those bodies subsequently becoming key sites in the articulation of national identity.<sup>5</sup> In the case of Ireland, however, White and Gilmartin argue that these recent developments are just the latest episode in a longer struggle concerning female reproductive rights, and of the state seeking to control the movement of pregnant women at its borders, although in the past the concern was with *citizens leaving* to seek abortions rather than *non-citizens arriving* to give birth.<sup>6</sup> While this is an important insight, in this paper I seek instead to explore that deeper understanding of Irish national identity that the citizenship referendum arguably drew upon and subsequently enshrined in law; namely the belief that Irishness is determined by descent or, in other words, by the blood flowing in one’s veins—whether at home or abroad. This is something I suggest must be understood as a legacy of colonialism now impacting the postcolonial present.

In his discussion of how the sovereign right of a certain people to a certain territory is commonly justified, the geographer Gerry Kearns points to the crucial role of nationalism and in particular the fact that most nationalisms are “an awkward mixture of both civic and ethnic elements;” in other words delimiting citizenship according to both residency and descent.<sup>7</sup> Citizenship, therefore, can be described as highly *uneven*, inherently geographical and involving processes that differentiate not only between “us” here and “them” there, but also—as is arguably the case with Ireland—between “us” there and “them” there, and now increasingly between “us” here and “them” who are now here.<sup>8</sup> The geographers Jen Dickinson and Adrian J. Bailey succinctly capture the contemporary situation when they comment, for example, that “it is widely recognised that the symmetries between territory and identity, and the idea that society and its citizenry are a discrete governable entity contained within the territorial boundaries of the national state, have been progressively fractured by the international movement of people.”<sup>9</sup> This is certainly the case in Ireland, where there is an urgent need for scholars (and especially geographers) to consider the implications of these shifts; a point made by Gilmartin and White who state that “instead of the fixed certainties of the past, the complexity, dynamism and speed of contemporary international migration demands nothing less than a new theoretical paradigm.”<sup>10</sup>

A useful move in that direction, applicable not only in Ireland but also elsewhere, would be to consider—as the geographers Sallie Marston and Katharyne Mitchell suggest—how citizenship is formulated over the *longue durée*; in other words, unfolding, expanding and contracting in specific contexts and in response to changes in the global system.<sup>11</sup> Such thinking draws upon the influential work of the geographer Doreen Massey, insofar as it conceptualizes citizenship (and its attendant spatiality) as being a process rather than a “monolithic social category” developed in isolation according to traditional principles.<sup>12</sup> As a result, citizenship can instead be re-envisioned

as an institutional means of articulating degrees of acceptance and community, and therefore a device that is open to being recreated, refashioned and retooled by a range of agents.

While the increased interconnectedness of the contemporary period cannot be denied, nor the impacts that associated processes are clearly having on notions of citizenship, nationalism, and territorial sovereignty, this is not necessarily unprecedented. States have longer histories of dealing with “outsiders” deemed problematic, including not only mobile migrants but also it should be noted, those considered “internal others” according to their race, ethnicity or religion for example, as political communities are forged temporally and spatially through processes of both inclusion and exclusion. Adopting such an approach—which considers citizenship formation over time and is not necessarily bound by state borders—might enable a better understanding of how notions of citizenship, nationalism, and territorial sovereignty were fashioned in the first place, again so as to open up possibilities for their retooling, given the challenge of today forging more tolerant and inclusive multicultural societies.

Interestingly, geographers have been reticent to interrogate mobility, perhaps because it is hard to pin down as a bounded category; a point made by Tim Cresswell, who studies mobility in the modern era and who argues that states in particular have played an enormous role in assigning meaning to its various forms and in controlling it.<sup>13</sup> Drawing from Cresswell, this paper seeks to illuminate how notions of British subjecthood were asserted territorially and mobilized legislatively in Ireland during the 1867 Fenian Rising, in particular to illegitimize the Irish nationalist political agenda of a small band of highly mobile Irish-American revolutionaries captured in Ireland, at a time when the colonial state was struggling to cope with a sense of Irishness that was not territorially bound. Subsequent developments, it is argued, contributed greatly to an important shift occurring in how citizenship would come to be determined by the United Kingdom and the United States; with British subjecthood giving way to republican citizenship, and an “imperial form of belonging” being eclipsed by one that privileged the individual over the state, and autonomous thought over tradition and religion.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, what this shift also arguably represented was a major transformation in how states would come to determine national identity; revising such principals as *jus sanguinis* (right of blood) and *jus soli* (right of soil)—and it occurred in a context of increased time-space compression triggered by new technologies of mobility that were moving millions of people like never before, in particular the Irish.<sup>15</sup>

In order to better understand the origins of today's dominant sense of Irishness, I therefore argue in this paper that it is necessary to return to this colonial period and the conditions in which it developed. Crucially, the nineteenth century in particular was a period in which the majority of the Irish people were themselves considered in racial terms by a colonial state and denied political representation on the island, and during which they were forced to emigrate in their millions. In the process this global diaspora would forge a common sense of Irishness that relied upon descent and blood ties, and as I have discussed elsewhere, a particularly strong transatlantic nationalist axis dedicated to realizing an independent nation state.<sup>16</sup> In considering this colonial context, the work of Kearns is again useful, in particular his utilization of the theorizing of the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben.<sup>17</sup> Here, Kearns argues that Ireland can then be considered a “state of exception” and the majority of its inhabitants a form of “bare life” who were considered to exist *biologically* by the colonial state, but to whom the full rights of British subjecthood did not apply.<sup>18</sup> Building upon Agamben's thinking, however, Kearns suggests that the exceptionalism of the Irish was not only a product of their location but also embodied in racial terms; since they were considered in effect a primitive species, with inherent characteristics making them unreasonable and ungovernable. Consequently, Ireland was governed during the nineteenth century especially

in an almost constant state of emergency, with the British utilizing a range of draconian powers of coercion, in particular the frequent suspension of habeas corpus.<sup>19</sup> As Kearns points out, “the Irish colonial body was territorialized, marked, constrained, exiled, or placed outside the normal regime of liberal justice,” and its safeguards did not apply to Irish bodies.<sup>20</sup> In this paper therefore, I suggest that only by better understanding this colonial context, and how it arguably produced an exclusive ethnic sense of Irishness still dominant, might it be possible to forge a more inclusive civic sense of Irishness (articulated through passport and citizenship laws for example) that is better suited to the challenges faced in Irish society in the twenty-first century, rather than those that were faced in the nineteenth.

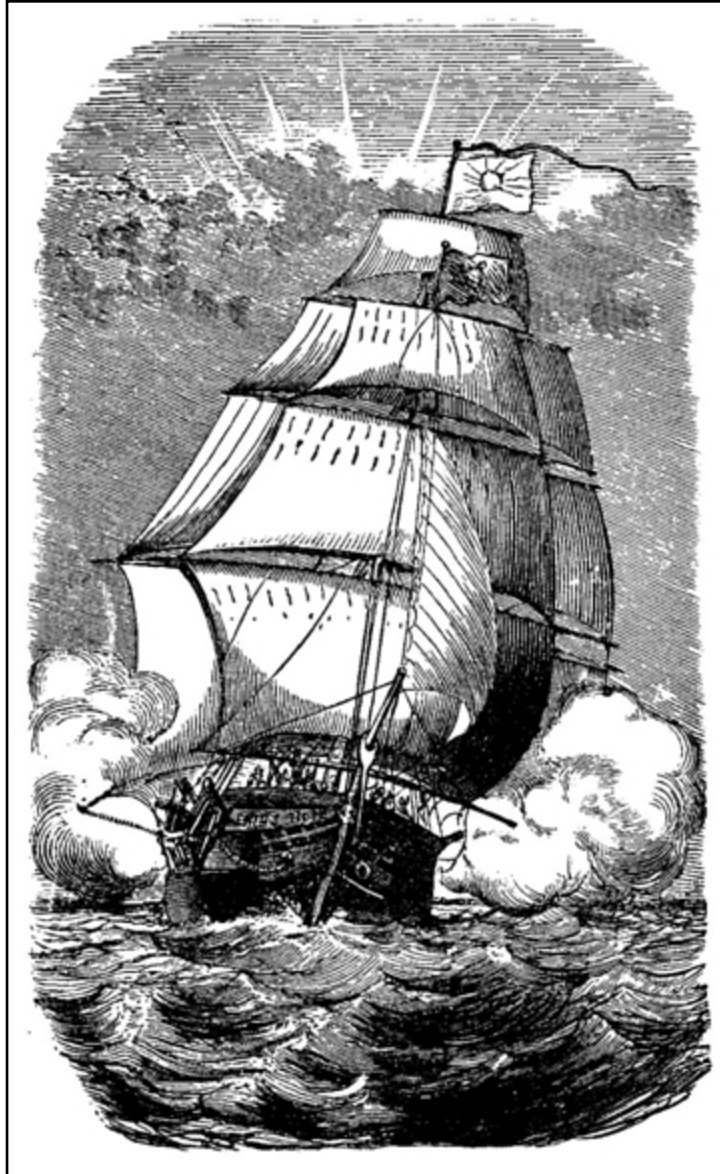
### The Fenian Fleet

With the accumulation of rents in Ireland, the accumulation of Irish in America keeps pace. The Irishman, banished by sheep and ox, re-appears on the other side of the ocean as a Fenian, and face to face with the old queen of the seas rises, threatening and more threatening, the young giant Republic:

*Acerba fata Romanus agunt  
Scelusque fraternae necis.*<sup>21</sup>

On an April evening in 1867, an eighty-one foot brigantine named the *Jacknell* slipped down the East River and out of New York City. In its hold, reputedly concealed in sewing boxes, piano cases and wine barrels, was some of the most innovative in modern weaponry, including thousands of breech-loading rifles, Spencer repeating rifles, Enfield and Austrian rifles, in addition to at least three pieces of light artillery in the form of six-pounder field guns, and over a million and a half rounds of ammunition.<sup>22</sup> The shipment was bound for Ireland and had been organized by an Irish nationalist organization named the Fenian Brotherhood. In the recent American Civil War, an estimated one hundred fifty thousand Irish-born men had fought in the ranks of the Union Army and a further forty thousand for the Confederacy.<sup>23</sup> The Fenian Brotherhood had close ties with the Union Army, but after the war it had become largely a social organization, organizing weekend picnics and rousing speeches while becoming increasingly factionalized. It nonetheless maintained close ties with the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) in Ireland, contributing funds and military experience to a transatlantic Irish nationalist movement that was then termed Fenianism, and to an attempted revolution in Ireland in 1867. Poorly organized, riddled with British informers, and heavily outnumbered by Crown forces, the 1867 Fenian Rising was an abject failure in which hundreds of individuals were arrested and imprisoned indefinitely under coercive measures, including an act suspending habeas corpus.<sup>24</sup> One member of the Fenian Brotherhood who evaded capture however, was an Irish-American officer named Captain Thomas James Kelly, who from his hiding place in Dublin on 13 March 1867, wrote to his comrades in New York city, begging them to send reinforcements; in his letter stating “it is war to the knife, only send us the knife.”<sup>25</sup>

The *Jacknell* was the only knife that could be mustered and, after rendezvousing with a steamship just off Sandy Point, NY, to receive on board forty battle-hardened veterans of both the Union and Confederate armies, it set sail for Ireland. Nine days later in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, these men reputedly celebrated Easter Sunday together; standing to attention on deck to receive their commissions and to witness the raising of the Fenian flag and the ship being rechristened the *Erin's Hope* amidst the deafening sound of ceremonial cannon-fire.<sup>26</sup>



**Figure 1.** The “Erin’s Hope” saluting the green flag (source: Timothy D. Sullivan, *The Dock and the Scaffold: The Manchester Tragedy and the Cruise of the Jacknall* [Dublin: A.M. Sullivan, 1868], 4).

It was late May by the time the *Erin’s Hope* arrived at Sligo Bay, and the men were disheartened to discover that their prearranged signals—“a certain type of light by night and a furled jib during the day”—solicited no response from land.<sup>27</sup> After five days, they were finally approached by a small boat and boarded by a fellow Irish-American officer, who duly informed them that the revolution had failed, and that hundreds of suspected Fenians were now imprisoned, but if they sailed south, they might still rendezvous with a small band still engaging colonial forces in County Cork.<sup>28</sup> Despite some internal disagreement, they did just this, sailing south while managing to avoid the suspicion of British naval frigates, possibly because brigantines were then a common sight in coastal trade. Off the coast of County Cork, however, again they received no response to their repeated signaling and so it was decided to go ashore in nearby



County Waterford.<sup>29</sup> Subsequently, on 1 June 1867, approximately twenty-eight men landed near Helvick pier, south of Dungarvan, in a small fishing boat so heavily weighed down that it grounded; forcing the men to wade ashore carrying only what small arms and ammunition they could on their person.<sup>30</sup> The men immediately split up into small parties, but a nearby coastguard station witnessed their landing and notified the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC), a well-armed paramilitary police force that served the Crown. Conspicuous by their wet American clothing and the unfamiliarity of most with the locality, the majority were quickly arrested and detained under the coercive measures then in effect.<sup>31</sup> Two of the men however, Patrick J. Keane and Frederick Fitzgibbon, reportedly made it as far as Cork before being captured, the latter of whom was described in the press as having “served all through the American war, and is literally covered with scars.”<sup>32</sup> Meanwhile, the *Erin’s Hope* avoided detection and returned to New York with the remainder of the Irish-American officers and its cargo intact.

### **“You are an Irishman; your goose is cooked”**

On the same day that these men set foot on Irish soil, some for the first time and others not since they had fled as children, an editorial in the *Times* of London argued that individuals of their ilk (many of whom had been captured earlier in the year) be treated exceptionally; in other words, not as British subjects with any legitimate political grievance, but rather as soldiers of fortune or “filibusterers” who deserved the severest of punishments:

[I]t is material to observe that several, if not most, of the Fenian leaders are not “insurgents” in any proper sense of the term. If they are Irishmen at all, they have long ceased to be Irish subjects of HER MAJESTY, and, instead of being driven into rebellion by oppression, either real or imaginary, they have come over from America on a filibustering errand and with filibustering objects. This makes a very great difference, and entirely deprives them of whatever extenuation may be pleaded on behalf of a “political offence.” Filibustering is not a political offence, but piracy on a grand scale,<sup>33</sup>

Responding to the argument that these imprisoned Irish-American officers be considered foreigners, an editorial in Dublin’s *Weekly News* (an Irish nationalist newspaper not yet suppressed) described this “pretence” as “silly and ridiculous,” pointing to the fact that the Irish nation was not territorially contained on the island and instead consisted of “two great sections of the Irish race in Ireland and America.”<sup>34</sup> Given the fact that it was then evident that the Irish Executive to the British Government intended to bring a number of these individuals to trial, the editorial proceeded to level charges of hypocrisy against the British, asking pointedly: “Will the privilege of foreigners be then accorded to them? Nothing of the kind. They will be taken as subjects of the Queen, taken in insurrection.”<sup>35</sup>

That summer of 1867, the Attorney General for Ireland assembled the case for the Crown against the *Erin’s Hope* prisoners. Already their fate had attracted controversy, for example the spectacle of their being publically marched in chains from one County Waterford jail to another had triggered stone-throwing from onlookers directed at accompanying members of the RIC, who responded with a bayonet charge that killed one man and seriously injured another.<sup>36</sup> Furthermore, two of the men, William J. Nagle and John Warren, penned letters from their jail cells that were subsequently published widely across the transatlantic Irish world. In these letters, the men claimed that their only crime had been to espouse American principles while in the United States, that their rights as American citizens had been violated, and that the US ambassador to Great Britain, Charles Francis Adams, had failed in his duty to protect them and their fellow American citizens incarcerated in Ireland.<sup>37</sup> For example, writing on July 9, 1867, Nagle stated

Dear Father: I was arrested on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June, in company with Colonel J. Warren, on the bridge crossing the Blackwater from Waterford into Youghal. We were kept in the Youghal Bridewell until the morning of the 14<sup>th</sup>, when we were sent to this place, marched through the streets of both places hand-cuffed like felons. We are now held under a warrant from the lord lieutenant of Ireland, and will remain prisoners so long as the fears and purposes of the government may require the suspension of the writ of *habeas corpus*, unless some action is taken by the authorities or government of our country. This is not exclusively an individual case, but becomes a question of right involving the liberty of every American citizen that sets foot on this soil. I ask the government of my country, which I have faithfully served, whose laws I have never violated, to secure to me that liberty which is my birthright, and of which I am now deprived without any cause or plea of justification by an authority I do not recognize –a government to which I owe no allegiance, and whose laws I have in no way infringed upon....<sup>38</sup>

On August 31, 1867, a letter written by Warren was published in Dublin's *Weekly News* entitled "A voice from the dungeon—a question for the American people," in which he addressed "the Irishmen in the United States" and stated the following:

In proof, on your arrival here you may be supplied with a passport, and consider yourself perfectly safe: but be careful –you may have brought an Irish bond [...]. Well, you arrive: you wear a good coat and a villainous moustache, and you have acquired a habit of standing erect and dashing ahead, swinging your hand, and, your republican barbarism, if you meet a lord you don't take your hat off: you look him right in the face: you don't get nervous: in fact, you care as little about him as about a common man. You wear the murdering square-toes... all go to prove that your education is dangerous; that you don't worship monarchy; that you're a republican—a freeman. You're pounced on; you get indignant; what right have the mercenaries of England to interfere with you, an American citizen? But now you have spoiled it. If you had kept your mouth shut you might have had some chance. A little of the brogue is left; you are an Irishman; your goose is cooked.<sup>39</sup>

Nagle and Warren here both contend that they are being treated exceptionally by the colonial state on the basis of their being Irish according to descent and that this was superseding their Americanness, even in the case of Nagle who could prove he was American-born. Endorsing the men's reframing of their predicament—as being one in which their rights as American citizens were being violated—while nonetheless maintaining that such individuals were unquestionably Irish, an editorial in the *Weekly News* subsequently posed the question: "If the Government of America does not protect its citizens according to the law of nations, let us ask why does it give them the empty name of citizenship?"<sup>40</sup>

While the United Kingdom had not supported the Confederacy, in the wake of the Civil War the United States did seek reparations from the United Kingdom for the damage done to the Union navy by Confederate ships built in British dockyards. It was this diplomatic discord that Nagle and Warren, who might be considered interstitial actors operating in the cracks between the two states, no doubt hoped to exploit to secure their release. The publication of their letters consequently had the desired effect, triggering a great deal of public clamor especially among Irish Americans and veterans of the Union Army, so much so that the US Secretary of State, William H. Seward, eventually bowed to political pressure and instructed Adams to intervene on the men's behalf. Despite the fact that Ireland was then ostensibly part of the United Kingdom

(following the Act of Union in 1801), Adams nonetheless wrote to the British *Foreign* Secretary, Lord Stanley, to seek clemency for the men; asserting that they had committed no crime in Ireland, and suggesting that “time served” might be considered punishment enough.<sup>41</sup>

Adams received no reply, however; an incident having taken place in the north of England now making clemency much more difficult to attain. On September 18, 1867, a man armed with a revolver in each hand had stepped brazenly into the path of a horse-drawn prison van on a busy Manchester city street, and aiming both barrels at the driver, ordered him to pull up. Witnessing one of his horses shot from beneath him, the driver and his accompanying police escort fled, where from a safe distance they witnessed the van being broken open while a number of armed men maintained a perimeter. Locked inside was Captain Kelly and in a neighboring compartment another Irish-American officer and his *chargé d'affaires*, Captain Timothy Deasy; the two men having been recently apprehended in the vicinity and subsequently positively identified in court by an informer.<sup>42</sup> Also inside the van however, was a police sergeant who refused to unlock the door and was consequently killed instantly when a bullet was reportedly fired into the lock so as to gain entry.<sup>43</sup> With the van open and the dead sergeant dragged out, the two released prisoners and members of their rescue party fled through a crowd of angry bystanders, and while Kelly and Deasy managed to evade recapture and subsequently returned to the United States, a number of individuals were apprehended amidst the melee.

The following day, the London *Times* described the rescue as an outrage “characteristic of Irish-Americans” and called for such “audacious practices of American rowdyism” to be treated severely.<sup>44</sup> Later it proposed that:

There are two elements in this precious plot—one American and the other Irish, and they are combined in the most desperate of characters with which we are brought into contact. To Irish wildness and inconsequence is added the familiarity with danger and bloodshed acquired in the American war.<sup>45</sup>

### **The Special Commission and its aftermath**

Events in Manchester cast a pall over the trial of the *Erin's Hope* prisoners, the first three of whom—William J. Nagle, John Warren, and Augustine Costello—appeared before a Special Commission convened in Dublin in late October, presided over by the Lord Chief Baron of Ireland David Richard Pigot and the Right Honorable William Keogh.<sup>46</sup> Here they were charged *as British subjects* with being treasonably engaged in a criminal conspiracy to overthrow the rule of Queen Victoria in Ireland and to establish an independent Irish republic, their crimes adjudged to have taken place in County Sligo where they had originally intended to come ashore. Added to the docket was a fourth individual named William Halpin, allegedly a Fenian General who had been arrested aboard a steamship in County Cork earlier in the year, bound for New York City.<sup>47</sup>

The three *Erin's Hope* prisoners were represented by counsel provided by the American Consul at Dublin, namely Mr. Heron QC, who in an audacious move on the opening day of proceedings demanded that, as American citizens, his clients should each be tried by a jury *de mediatate linguae*, an ancient legal precedent that afforded non-British subjects a half non-British jury.<sup>48</sup> The justices granted Mr. Heron's request in the case of Nagle, who was American born, and subsequently adjourned his trial. They denied it, however, in the case of Warren and Costello on the basis that they had been born on the island of Ireland—the Lord Chief Baron firmly asserting the “Doctrine of Indefeasible Allegiance,” and stating for example:

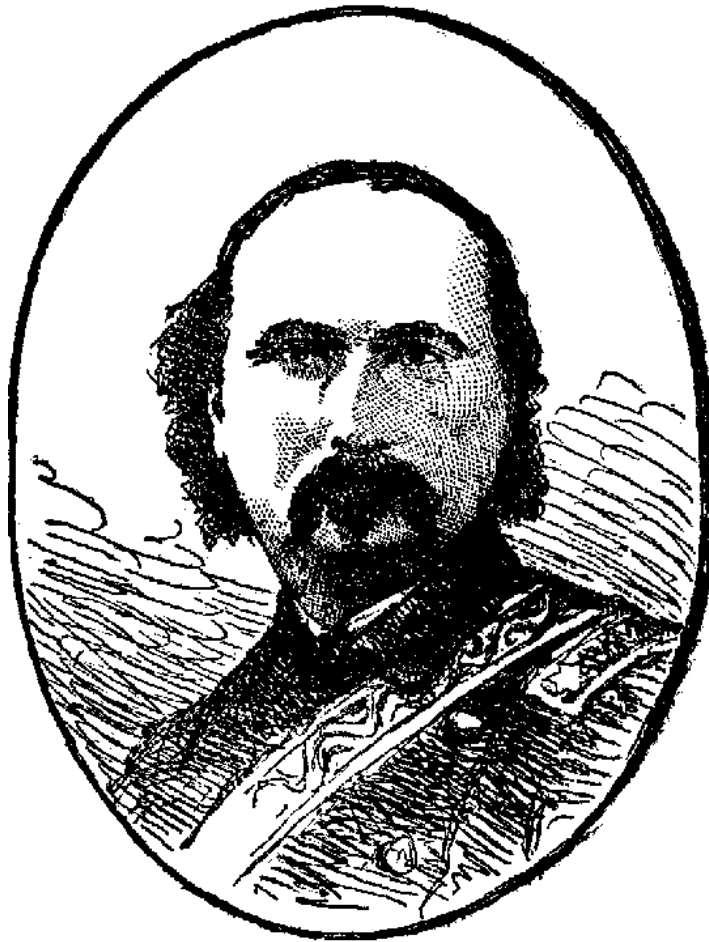
I cannot allow that proposition to be put forward without meeting it with a prompt and unhesitating denial. According to the law of England, a law which has been

administered without any variation or doubt from the very earliest times, he who once is under the allegiance of the English sovereign remains so forever.<sup>49</sup>

Quoting from Blackstone's Commentaries on the Laws of England, he expanded:

Natural allegiance is such as is due from natural born subjects. This is a tie which cannot be severed or altered by any change of time, place, or circumstance, nor by anything but the united concurrence of the legislature [...]. Indeed the natural born subject of one prince, to whom he owes allegiance, may be entangled by subjecting himself absolutely to another, but it is his own act that brings him into these straits and difficulties of owing service to two masters; and it is unreasonable, that, by such voluntary act of his own, he should be able at pleasure to unloose those bonds by which he is connected to his natural prince.<sup>50</sup>

As the first man in the dock, Warren immediately protested, "as a citizen of the United States, against being arraigned, or tried, or adjudged by any British subject."<sup>51</sup> After being informed that only his solicitors could address the court on his behalf, Warren then dramatically abandoned all legal defense, asserting: "I instruct my counsel to withdraw from the case, and I place it in the hands of the United States Government; which Government has now become the principal."<sup>52</sup>



**Figure 2.** Colonel John Warren (source: Sullivan, *The Dock and the Scaffold*, 73, 82).



He would plead not guilty, but over the course of the following week the prosecution presented the case for the Crown against him, including the testimony of an informer who swore that Warren was a member of the Fenian Brotherhood and damning evidence provided by various fellow members of the *Erin's Hope* expedition, obtained in return for their release. Before sentence was passed, Warren took full advantage of his opportunity to address the court, pointing out that he was not in Ireland for the Rising, that being a member of the Fenian Brotherhood in the United States was not illegal, that he had been tortured in custody, and again that he was not a British subject but an American citizen. On November 2, 1867, he was nonetheless found guilty of treason-felony, but in a sign that his line of defense had perhaps proven somewhat successful, his sentencing was postponed.<sup>53</sup>

Appearing next in the dock, Costello also alleged that he had been mistreated in custody, while disputing the jurisdiction of the court on the basis of his being a naturalized American citizen; stating:

I did forswear allegiance to all foreign potentates, and more particularly I forswore all allegiance to the Crown of Great Britain. Your lordships say that the law of the land rules that I had no right to do anything of the kind. That is a question for the governments to settle. America is guilty of a great fraud if I am in the wrong.<sup>54</sup>



**Figure 3.** Captain Augustine Costello (source: Sullivan, *The Dock and the Scaffold*, 73, 82).

Unlike Warren however, he did not direct his counsel to withdraw, and after the Crown had presented much the same case against him, Mr. Heron QC pointed to the number of soldiers, policemen and detectives in the courtroom, and to events taking place simultaneously in Manchester—to argue that his client was not receiving a fair trial.<sup>55</sup> He was nonetheless found guilty of treason-felony, but only after his trial was aborted and a second one begun anew, following the discovery of incriminating letters in his jail cell –evidence which Costello alleged the prosecution had forged.<sup>56</sup>

The last man to appear in the dock was William Halpin, who also immediately asserted that he too was an American citizen, before proceeding to conduct his own defense, according to some press reports quite expertly. In his final statement before verdict was passed, he defiantly espoused his American republican principles, much to the consternation of the seated Justices:

You are now trying a man who has lived all his life-time in a country where freedom is venerated and adored. You may believe, gentlemen, that you have the spirit of freedom here; but I claim, gentlemen, that the real spirit of freedom has fled these shores many a century ago—has sped across the Atlantic, and perched upon American soil... Perhaps you have read the Declaration of American Independence. In that declaration, drawn up by one Thomas Jefferson, it is stated that every man born into this world is born free and equal; that he has the right—the inalienable right—to live in liberty and the pursuit of happiness.<sup>57</sup>

Halpin was nonetheless also found guilty of treason-felony, and in mid November he and Warren were sentenced to fifteen years penal servitude each, while Costello was sentenced to twelve years on account of his younger age. On being informed of their sentencing, Halpin boldly proclaimed that he would take “fifteen years more for Ireland any day,” while Warren sarcastically commented that he “would not take a lease of this kingdom for thirty-seven and a half cents.”<sup>58</sup> The three men might have considered themselves lucky to have escaped the death penalty, however, especially if they had received word of the fate awaiting the five men found guilty of murdering the police sergeant in Manchester. These men were Phillip Allen, Michael Larkin, Thomas Maguire, Edward O’Meagher Condon and Michael O’Brien, all of whom had professed their innocence to no avail, while the last two were American citizens who had also disputed the jurisdiction of the court.<sup>59</sup> Unlike in Dublin however, counsel was not provided to the American citizens, so convinced was US Ambassador Adams of their guilt.<sup>60</sup> After Maguire was granted a dramatic “eleventh-hour” full and unconditional pardon (a victim of mistaken identity apparently), Adams finally intervened to secure a commuted sentence for Condon on the basis that he was American-born, however he did not intervene in the case of O’Brien who was a naturalized American citizen. On 23 November, O’Brien was subsequently executed by hanging alongside Allen and Larkin; the three men soon immortalized in Irish nationalist mythology as the “Manchester Martyrs.”<sup>61</sup>

The execution of an American citizen whose appeals to his own government went unanswered, and the sentencing of a host of others had raised a number of important issues between the United Kingdom and the United States in need of resolution, concerning subjecthood, citizenship, expatriation and naturalization. Meanwhile in November 1867, another attempt to rescue an Irish-American officer from British custody went terribly awry at Clerkenwell in London, when an explosion not only destroyed the wall of a prison but also a part of a working-class neighborhood, killing twelve people and seriously eroding what British public sympathy there was with the Fenians in the wake of the Manchester executions.<sup>62</sup> Realizing that there had to be a better way of dealing with the threat posed to the British state by these mobile Irish nationalist actors, a prominent lawyer named Vernon Harcourt –with close ties to the British Liberal Party

that would come to power the following year –wrote a series of letters to the editor of the *London Times* under the pseudonym of *Historicus*. In his first letter, entitled “Who is a British subject?,” Harcourt argued that it was untenable in an era of mass migration to continue to advocate the principal of *jus soli* (right of soil), in other words to claim indefeasible allegiance from British subjects who had renounced that subjecthood in the process of becoming naturalized citizens elsewhere.<sup>63</sup> What’s more, he argued that to also combine that with the principle of *jus sanguinis* (right of blood) was outdated and should be abolished, in other words to extend the doctrine of indefeasible allegiance to individuals born overseas and argued to be of British descent by virtue of their parentage.<sup>64</sup> Drawing from various legal authorities, Harcourt argued that the laws concerning subjecthood, citizenship, expatriation and naturalization therefore required revision, in particular so that members of the Fenian Brotherhood could no longer hope to escape justice on a technicality, or cause further diplomatic discord by claiming that their rights as American citizens had been ignored. He wrote that: “The more clearly the men are recognized as American citizens the more directly responsible the American Government would be for their conduct abroad.”<sup>65</sup> And the accompanying editorial agreed: “We admit that, on grounds of policy not to say commonsense the argument for revision is irresistible. We see, then, no good reason why the British Government should decline any friendly overtures that may be made by the United States with a view to its amendment.”<sup>66</sup>

Having read this, that very same day US Ambassador Adams telegraphed Secretary of State Seward, suggesting that they make a “friendly overture” to the British Government on the subject. The two men were anxious to remedy the incongruence which clearly existed between the two states regarding these matters; an incongruence that individuals such as Nagle and Warren had attempted to exploit, and which was still contributing to a rising tide of Anglophobia in the U.S., increasingly drawing American politicians into the fray. Writing to Seward on December 11 he proposed, therefore, that they take advantage of this unique moment to improve Anglo-American relations:

The mode in which this difficult matter is treated by both writers, affords encouragement to the belief that something may be done to harmonize the rule as well here as at home into one system. In my opinion nothing is more desirable in order to remove amicably the cause for future collisions on this subject.<sup>67</sup>

Over the course of the following year, US government officials would continue to press their British counterparts for a naturalization treaty, the issue bound up not only with the US presidential election of that year, but also entangled with American demands for reparations for damage inflicted by a British-built Confederate warship named the *Alabama*.<sup>68</sup> After some initial foot-dragging by the Conservative Government on the issue, the two governments effectively agreed to a number of principles proposed by Secretary of State Seward in March 1868. At this point, a Royal Commission was charged with investigating the legal parameters of the proposals; the British in effect conceding the principle of expatriation and beginning the process of abandoning the Doctrine of Indefeasible Allegiance as gracefully as possible.<sup>69</sup> In December 1868, the British Liberal party under the administration of William Gladstone replaced that of the Conservative Benjamin Disraeli, and in May 1870, the necessary naturalization legislation was finally signed at the Motley-Clarendon Convention and ratified later that year. Here the British agreed to treat all British subjects who had become naturalized American citizens as if they were American-born citizens, in return for the Americans agreeing to act likewise with British subjects in similar circumstances. Meanwhile, as a result of continuous pressure from the US government, combined with the campaigning of an Amnesty Association and the receptiveness of this Gladstonian

administration, the vast majority of imprisoned Fenians had been freed by 1870—including all of the *Erin's Hope* prisoners, who were shipped back to the United States as a condition of their parole.<sup>70</sup>

### Conclusions

John Warren had asserted in court that “the present cases would form a great and momentous epoch in the history of these times,” and this historical chapter does serve as an exemplary illustration of the manner in which mobile migrant bodies (such as his own) were deemed threatening to states, resulting in their becoming key sites in the articulation of national identity.<sup>71</sup> In the case of Warren and his fellow *Erin's Hope* prisoners, however, that national identity being articulated was a complex thing.

From an Irish perspective, for example, these men were members of a transatlantic Irish community and possessed a sense of Irish nationalism that had developed overseas and which they subsequently sought to reterritorialize on the island of Ireland, aided in no small part by their political voice, their money, weaponry and expertise.<sup>72</sup> Who were the Irish in Ireland to question the motives of such men as William J. Nagle; American-born and Irish by descent perhaps, but nonetheless prepared to die advancing the cause of Irish nationalism? Over the course of the late-nineteenth and into the early-twentieth century, such individuals would play key roles as Irish nationalists, arguably culminating in a New-York-born son of Irish and Cuban immigrants becoming the first president of an independent Irish Republic—namely Éamon de Valera. While a state-endorsed, territorialized Irish nationalist narrative would subsequently come to downplay the crucial role that the diaspora played, the proof that they did can arguably still be found in Irish citizenship law and the privileging of descent.

From a British perspective on the other hand, men such as those captured off the *Erin's Hope* were argued to be British subjects according to the Doctrine of Indefeasible Allegiance. In this regard, while the geographer Lynn Staheli points out that “the politics of inclusion may require exclusionary acts,” this is arguably an example of the opposite being true: that the politics of *exclusion* may sometimes require *inclusionary* acts. Subsequently, these men become the focus of questions of what it meant to be British. Could that, for example, be passed down according to descent? Did it even apply to the Irish who were arguably conceptualized as ‘bare life’ and only really considered to be subjects somehow in a court of law, not to mention the question of whether such legal arguments could even continue to be made in an era of increased mobility, expatriation and naturalization?<sup>73</sup> Consequently, British laws of subjecthood were redefined; shifting in the direction of a republican notion of citizenship more civic than ethnic, although it should be noted, still excluding the majority of the inhabitants of the island of Ireland. Such a development, however, nonetheless illustrates that citizenship is far from the monolithic social category that state actors might imagine it to be, but rather something that evolves over time—expanding and contracting in response to the threat arguably embodied in individuals deemed to be “out of place” at the scale of the state, for example the *Erin's Hope* prisoners.<sup>74</sup>

Today, approximately one hundred fifty years later, the Irish people utilize the legislative power of the state to privilege descent in citizenship law and passport applications, considering as exceptional those born on the island of Ireland who do not share that descent; their mobility interpreted as a threat to an essence of Irishness still based upon blood. Defining Irishness in this manner, however, is arguably a legacy of colonialism, a means by which diasporic nationalism was mobilized and the racial ascription of the colonizer repurposed as a source of strength. Given the challenges of today forging a more tolerant and inclusive multicultural sense of Irishness on the island, the question is whether it still makes sense to remain shackled to this colonial legacy, to continue to drag this ball and chain around.



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# Creating “A Great Ireland in America:” Reading and Remembrance in Buffalo, New York, 1872-1888

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**ABSTRACT:** Recent writing on diasporas has encouraged a shift away from viewing them as either quantifiable entities or as inevitable outcomes of international migration. Scholars now seek to highlight the ways in which diasporic identities are actively made and remade, and the connections forged both within and between places from such efforts. This paper addresses two dimensions of the process as they related to individuals of Irish birth and ancestry in Buffalo, New York, in the late nineteenth century. The first dimension relates to print culture and the role of the weekly *Catholic Union* newspaper in structuring and circulating a diaspora nationalism with a strong anticolonial identification, the second to the process of performing public acts of Irish nationalist memory that were simultaneously declarations of American loyalty. In the latter case, Robert Emmet (1778-1803), organizer of the 1803 rebellion in Dublin, became the pivotal figure around which a culture of commemoration took shape from the mid-1880s onwards. Together, these two dimensions of reading and remembrance offer examples of how diaspora-related cultural creativity was fashioned and articulated in one place and how it could be used to project a distinct Irish-American community while mobilizing opinions about Ireland’s political future.

Recent writing on diasporas has encouraged a shift away from viewing them as either quantifiable entities or as inevitable outcomes of international migration. In 2005, Rogers Brubaker observed a somewhat chaotic spread of usages of the term “in semantic, conceptual, and disciplinary space” as scholars moved beyond the classical “victim/refugee” notion of diaspora.<sup>1</sup> His was far from a lone critique, and in questioning prevalent assumptions about the coherence, condition, and stability of diasporas, scholars have come to ask how they are brought into being, come alive, or simply “happen.” For Brubaker, diaspora is to be treated as “a category of practice, project, claim, and stance, rather than as a bounded group.”<sup>2</sup> In a related vein, Martin Sökefeld writes that diaspora is “not simply a ‘given’ of migrants’ existence” but rather something that “has to be effected time and again by agents who employ a variety of mobilizing practices.”<sup>3</sup> Migrants thus negotiate not only the particularities of settlement destinations within various national contexts (their “becoming” as Americans, Canadians, Argentinians, and so forth); their attention, and that of their descendants, may become drawn in various ways to those currents of transnational geopolitics that continue to affect their place of origin.

The flight of hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children from famine-scarred Ireland in the late 1840s has been recognized as a formative moment in the making of a modern diaspora.<sup>4</sup> If a more considered deployment of the term includes a return to the notion of a forced



migration, or a migration that was at least *popularly believed to be* an involuntary one of “exile,” evidence relating to Ireland can be found in sources such as immigrant correspondence and the rhetoric of nationalists, and nowhere more abundantly than in the United States in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>5</sup> Matthew Jacobson uses the vivid phrase “special sorrows” to summarize the general shape of the “diasporic imagination” of the American Irish in a study that also discusses Polish and Zionist nationalism.<sup>6</sup> Narrations of displacement and the historical injustices of English colonialism, communicated in speeches, newspapers, pamphlets, and letters, were effective in creating not only a coherent picture of an Irish homeland but also a fervent belief in Irish nationhood and a desire that the Irish be free to govern their own affairs. At the same time, the popular idea of a worldwide “Irish race” that was “liberty-loving” wherever they went became reified to the point of being commonsensical. Not only was a primordial sense of ethnicity structured and promoted by a class of educated leaders and publishers, it was also becoming strongly aligned with the majority religious denomination in Ireland and that of the majority of post-famine Irish-born in America: Catholicism.<sup>7</sup>

If the diaspora-related aspects of Irish-American settlement experiences are therefore best seen not simply as a “special case of ethnicity” but also as ongoing works in progress, what merits closer investigation is how they were actively made and remade within and between places.<sup>8</sup> Kevin Kenny recommends that light be shed on “the connections migrants form abroad and the kinds of culture they produce” in words, images, and material objects; such an approach thus treats diaspora-related “projects,” and their associated geographies, as experimental in nature.<sup>9</sup> As Elizabeth Mavroudi notes, however, an increased focus on the fluid, malleable and complex reality of diasporas should not neglect how essentialist arguments about their collective “sameness,” including consensus notions of “homeland,” were dynamically and strategically produced in different historical and geographical contexts.<sup>10</sup>

This paper addresses two dimensions of the process by which an Irish diaspora culture was fashioned in one particular corner of the United States, Buffalo, New York, between the early 1870s and late 1880s. The first dimension relates to print culture and the role of the so-called “ethnic press,” the second to the role of popular memory and the active promotion of those elevated as heroes of Irish nationalism in particular. As we shall see, these two dimensions of Buffalo’s Irish diaspora culture were integrated to an important degree by the coordinating activities of a small but influential network of male middle-class activists who, bound by a series of overlapping associational ties, remained dedicated to furthering the causes of Catholicism and Ireland at both local and wider scales.

The ethnic press was, and still is, an important component of the making of modern diasporas, and the term invites speculation about not only the content, geographical reach/circulation and audience relating to these newspapers, but also about what makes them “ethnic.” Although a number of Irish journals were available in the United States before the mid 1840s, the famine immigration and the exile of the leaders of the Young Ireland rebellion of 1848 kick-started a new era in Irish-American journalism with New York and Boston emerging as the principal publishing centers.<sup>11</sup> While Patrick Meehan’s *Irish American* (New York) left no doubt about its intended audience, the *Pilot*, official organ of the Catholic archdiocese of Boston, was the widest-circulating “Irish”-American weekly circa 1870.<sup>12</sup> The ownership and content of these weeklies also illustrated the division of opinion about what dimension of identity the American Irish should emphasize most in the 1850s, their Irishness or their Catholicism.

The fact that newspapers such as the *Pilot* reached into many Irish communities across the United States brings into focus the possibility of Irish households in Buffalo and elsewhere having access to more than one “ethnic” newspaper and how these could have been influential in creating a diasporic sensibility in a way that was more continuous than sporadic. It also invites

more consideration of how an Irish-American reading public was being created not only in second- and third-tier American cities and towns in which the Irish were numerous, but also in much-understudied rural districts. Catholic diocesan newspapers written in English could, outside the main Irish hubs of Boston, New York, and Chicago, cater to an audience of primarily Irish birth or ancestry without seriously challenging the circulation figures of the *Pilot*. It is in this context that Buffalo's *Catholic Union*, the focus of the first part of this paper, became a weekly where an Irish ethnic and diasporic identity was interpellated and cultivated in the 1870s and 1880s, not least under the influential editorship of Rev. Patrick Cronin.<sup>13</sup>

The second dimension of a diaspora-oriented culture examined here concerns the symbolic and ideological uses of what might be termed "diasporic heroes." The principal hero, and martyr, in this case was Robert Emmet (1778-1803), sometimes referred to as "Bold" Robert Emmet. Although Emmet's rebellion against the British administration in Ireland, staged on the streets of Dublin in 1803, was a failure, and for which he paid the price with his life, his "celebrity status" reached a peak in the final decades of the century when the staging of annual commemorations of his birthday (March 4) became something of a staple across Irish America to the point of rivaling St. Patrick's celebrations in many places.<sup>14</sup> Marianne Elliott has demonstrated how the "Emmet legend" grew in strength over the course of the century, appealing as it did to the romantic and revolutionary imagination within Irish nationalism.<sup>15</sup> Here was a comparatively young man, a Trinity College student born into a middle-class Dublin Anglican family, who was executed for his continued belief that Ireland should govern itself separately as a republic, five years after the failed United Irishmen rebellion of 1798. An anticolonial identification thus became a central ingredient of Irish diasporic identity, fed by the textual and performative remembrances of figures such as Emmet, amongst other means.<sup>16</sup>

For all of his seeming suitability as a Great Man, and the exile of members of his family to the United States, the rise of Emmet in Irish America nonetheless had its experimental elements more than fifty years after his death. Heroes, for Geoffrey Cubitt, are those whose existences and reputations receive not only fame and honor in their own lifetime or later, but also "a special allocation of imputed meaning and symbolic significance – that not only raises them above others in public esteem but makes them the object of some kind of collective emotional investment."<sup>17</sup> Discourses of heroic reputations are in turn "products of imaginative labour through which societies and groups define and articulate their values and assumptions, and through which individuals within those societies or groups establish their participation in larger social and cultural identities."<sup>18</sup> The key word here is labor; if the ethnic press in the United States was responsible for bringing a pantheon of Irish mythical, literary, and political heroes to the attention of audiences in multiple places in the second half of the nineteenth century, selecting a small number of these "national assets" to actively commemorate was made to varying degrees by a nexus of national and regional media operators and lower-level activists in places such as Buffalo.<sup>19</sup> Such labor not only upheld a diasporic Irish nationalism but also secured a sense of belonging to the American nation. While Emmet's deeds and death marked moments in an era when attempts to attain Irish independence foundered, the memory of his heroic failure acted as a reminder of the potential still remaining for the achievement of that goal after centuries of colonialism.

The performances enacted at these "ethnic events" in honor of Emmet thus supplied an important affective complement to the stories and opinions related in newspapers, all the while facilitating the collective consumption of narrated self-images of what it meant to be Irish and American. Together, these two dimensions of reading and remembrance offer compelling examples of how diaspora-related cultural creativity was forged in one place and how it could be used to mobilize political opinions about Ireland's future. They also enable us to picture "a series of continually re-emphasised diasporic political and emotional connections" within

communities.<sup>20</sup> This calendar of diasporic “happenings,” operating at different levels of intensity over time, ultimately mattered when the time came to contribute money to the cause of Ireland. And as nineteenth-century Irish political leaders from Daniel O’Connell in the 1840s to Charles Stewart Parnell in the 1880s well knew, financial support from the American Irish, buoyed up by waves of anticolonial sentiment, could do a great deal of good.<sup>21</sup>

The period from the early 1870s to late 1880s is important for several reasons. In the wake of unsuccessful border raids on Canada in 1866 and 1870 by the most recent champions of Irish republicanism, the Fenian Brotherhood, a new movement for constitutional nationalism took shape in Ireland that sought the return of a Dublin parliament or “Home Rule.” By the late 1870s, the agitation entered a more activist phase with the rise of the charismatic Parnell, the beginning of the Irish “Land War,” and the formation of Land League branches in Ireland and North America. These political developments in Ireland were paralleled by an emerging accommodation in the Irish-American press between proponents of Catholicism and nationalism, as political news from Ireland continued to matter.<sup>22</sup> At the same time, the centenaries of the birth of Daniel O’Connell (1775-1847) and Robert Emmet provided Irish America with opportunities to measure its depth of interest in, and evaluations of, the political contributions of two heroes from the homeland.

In the United States, and despite sacrifices made in the Civil War, the combination of lowly economic status, increased political participation, and a steadfast religious loyalty meant that Irish Catholics’ struggle to be accepted as fellow (white) Americans had anything but ended. In local politics, the Irish entered the fray in most big cities and received blame for the rise of the “ex-plebe” ward politician whose dubious moral standards corrupted the rational course of municipal decision-making.<sup>23</sup> The American Catholic hierarchy, meanwhile, continued to face domestic political and media opposition to its push for state-funded education, and those Catholics looking to Europe were repulsed by the invasion of Rome by the Italian Army in September 1870 against the opposition of Pope Pius IX. The construction of a Catholic infrastructure in dioceses and parishes nevertheless continued from the 1870s onward, one that included not only churches, schools, colleges, and other institutions, but also associations and societies that fostered devotional patterns of worship and a press that defended Catholic values. Modest degrees of economic mobility in Irish communities across the republic enabled the emergence of a lay middle-class energy that in turn spearheaded projects of social uplift. In an era of continued anti-Catholic hostility at several levels, it was the defense of not only Catholic pride that was at stake, but also Irish pride. It was in this context that organs such as the *Catholic Union* appeared.

Buffalo, a border city located at the eastern edge of Lake Erie in western New York State, is one into which large numbers of Irish migrated during the nineteenth century, especially between the 1840s and 1860s. By 1880, 10,310 Irish-born residents lived in a city of 155,134, and they, alongside Buffalo’s two other principal socio-cultural groups, Anglo-American “Yankees” and Germans, occupied distinctive positions in the city’s labor market as well as its social geography. In comparative cultural terms, however, Buffalo was quite German; almost half of the population was of this background by the mid 1870s, clustering mostly on the city’s east side, and they possessed a mix of not only middle- and working-class occupations but also religious denominations.<sup>24</sup> Of the twenty Catholic churches in the city identified by Bishop Steven Ryan in 1879, ten served German congregants.<sup>25</sup> The vast majority of those of Irish birth and ancestry, on the other hand, were working-class Catholics and their south-side concentration close to the waterfront was, in the mind’s eye of many Buffalonians, their primary locality of residence. A *Catholic Union* editorial complained in 1876 that contrasting representations of “the drunkenness of the Celt and the sobriety of the Teuton” had long been “thrown up into our face.”<sup>26</sup> But the Irish in Buffalo became known to their neighbors not only for their capacity for alcohol consumption or local political activism; their ability to respond to efforts to right Ireland’s wrongs was also observed

and acknowledged during the era of Fenian border raids.<sup>27</sup> With immigration from Ireland at a low ebb, Buffalo's Irish-American community had reached a level of multi-generational maturity by the 1870s that makes it an appropriate place to study the ongoing cultivation of Irish diasporic sensibilities.

Bishop Steven Vincent Ryan was the prime mover behind the formation of what would become Buffalo's new "Irish" paper, the *Catholic Union*. Ryan was Canadian-born and of Irish ancestry and was consecrated the second bishop of Buffalo in November 1868. Top of his agenda was to continue the work of his Irish-American predecessor, John Timon, in building a solid institutional apparatus for the diocese to serve the coming generations of American Catholics. Upon arrival in the city, Ryan would have noted the existence of a German Catholic Young Men's Association, established in 1866 (re-organized as the Buffalo Catholic Institute in 1870) as well as a weekly newspaper for that section of his congregation, *Die Aurora*, founded in 1851. His Irish section likely caused him greater worry, not simply because of problems relating to alcohol and underemployment, but also because of the support for violent revolution in Ireland among sections of the community, something fervently opposed by Timon, in the aftermath of the 1866 raid. Ryan's key windows into this mentality, if he had occasion to consult them, were a series of locally produced and short-lived newspapers such as the *Buffalo Globe*, *Fenian Volunteer*, and *United Irishman*.<sup>28</sup>

Sections of Buffalo's Irish community thus received regular schooling in anticolonial discourses that pitted the unfortunate Gael against the oppressive Saxon. The three above-mentioned papers were financed by Patrick O'Day, an auctioneer who used his premises to store arms for the local Fenian regiment in the summer of 1866, while James McCarroll, an Irish-born Canadian who supported the William Roberts wing that planned the Canadian raids, participated in the production and editing of at least the *Globe* and *Fenian Volunteer* after arriving in Buffalo in early 1866. The *Fenian Volunteer*, the only one of the O'Day-financed papers with extant issues, invited its readership to form Fenian branches or 'circles' in their communities that would, among other things, help "an oppressed people" to "assimilate themselves more readily to American institutions, customs and manners, than any other on the face of this earth."<sup>29</sup> But while Irish immigrant children could then "be taught to love and honor the principles of American freedom," so too would they learn "to regard with abhorrence the name of England, associated as it has always been, with famine, sword and flame, as well the thousand nameless cruelties which have been practiced upon the Irish race from time immemorial."<sup>30</sup> The issue of 4 January 1868 claimed that the paper's "city list" contained "two or three thousand names" though this wide interval was used not to boast but rather complain that the numbers of Irish origin in Buffalo merited a potential readership of between ten and fifteen thousand names.<sup>31</sup> In an effort to drum up advertising revenue, the paper also stated that it was circulating "widely through New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and various other parts of this Union, as well as through Canada."<sup>32</sup>

The *Fenian Volunteer* matters because it not only attempted to bolster a diaspora-oriented awareness among Buffalo's Irish that was revolutionary in nature, but it also sought to capture the attention of Irish communities within a wider region of the northeastern United States. Correspondence trickled in from towns and counties across New York State and beyond with descriptions of progress in circle formation. Poems such as "The Trust of the Gael," "Erin's Dead," "God Save Ireland," "Remember Allen" and "Song of the Fenian Soldier" combined with articles on the lives of Brian Boru, 1798 Rebellion general Joseph Holt, and the histories of ancient Irish landmarks to present a picture of past Irish glories alongside current dramas. The paper does not appear to have lasted much more than one year, however; the latest extant issue is dated September 5, 1868.<sup>33</sup>



In the wake of the second Fenian raid on Canada in 1870, and despite an all-round feeling of dejection and disappointment, those in Buffalo who sought a new outlet for advanced Irish nationalist rhetoric could find it in imported copies of Toronto's *Irish Canadian* (established in 1863) as well as a new weekly founded in New York, the *Irish World*, edited by Patrick Ford. But they would also come to find some acceptable material in the diocesan newspaper founded by Bishop Ryan. Given that the city's Germans were well-served by at least three daily newspapers in their own language in the late 1860s besides *Die Aurora*, Ryan's undertaking could not ignore the diocesan population of Irish birth and ancestry as a distinctive portion of the prospective reading public.<sup>34</sup>

The first issue of the *Catholic Union* appeared on April 25, 1872 with J. Edmund Burke as editor. Burke was Argentinian-born, Long Island-raised, and spent twenty years in the journalistic business in New York before arriving in Buffalo.<sup>35</sup> His opening editorial declared the paper's mission to act "as a defender of Catholic principles, an expositor of Catholic truth; or an adherent to and counselor in the cause of justice and of right."<sup>36</sup> Money was critical to the venture's success and it was published by the Buffalo Catholic Publication Company (BCPC; see also Figure 1), an entity organized under the auspices of Bishop Ryan.<sup>37</sup> The early cohort of readers was told, for example, of how, "promptly and generously, both Clergy and Laity responded to the call of their Bishop, subscribing the Capital necessary to place the enterprise on a firm and permanent basis."<sup>38</sup>

There was, for Burke, no guarantee that a paper geared to specifically Catholic interests would succeed. As he opined unsubtly in the fourth issue, "Catholics do *not* take such an interest in supporting the journals devoted to defending them from attacks by Protestants and Infidels."<sup>39</sup> Thus, the question of capturing an audience within and beyond a largely working-class urban community must have been seriously considered alongside the question of how much theologically focused discussion to include. Burke was not short of ideas; he had worked for the *Catholic Freeman's Journal* in New York, long-time rival of Patrick Meehan's *Irish American* and now the *Irish World*, and experienced stints at the *Herald* and *Times* as well.<sup>40</sup> Despite the wording of the opening editorial, there was more to the *Catholic Union* than the mere cultivation of Catholic pride. The editor and his advisors were acutely aware of the largely Irish-American audience they were likely to attract in Buffalo and western New York, and Burke recognized that the literary and political histories of Ireland, as well as its current affairs, were important and legitimate items of entry. The maiden issue included an "Irish News" section, and over the first months, this section took up an average of 1.5 columns per eight-page issue. Readers could learn about everything from land sales in County Meath to the building of new churches and convents, the deaths of priests, public appointments, and the occasional murder. They were also kept informed about developments in the movement for Home Rule and the performances of Irish representatives in the British House of Commons. Burke was more revealing about his Irish reading public in his farewell editorial of April 2, 1874. After reflecting on the newspaper's aim to defend "Catholicity from the attacks, open or covert, that are constantly being made upon it," Burke stated that an additional objective was:

[T]o defend, especially, the Irish race from the venomous and malign slanders which a spirit of bigotry, by no means extinct among non-Catholics, frequently utters against them. I have endeavored to show that the Irish people, whether in their native land or as American citizens, have done nothing that should be counted to their disparagement; that they are as honest in their dealings as upright in their lives, as commendable in their daily walk and conversation, as patriotic

in their acts and intentions, as any other class of men who go to make up our American community, and that they have political rights co-equal with other citizens of whatever name, class or degree.<sup>41</sup>

Some prominent local Irish Americans were also heavily invested in the *Catholic Union*. Besides Bishop Ryan, two of the three lay members of the board of directors of the BCPC, George Chambers and John McManus, were influential figures in Buffalo's Irish world. Chambers had served as alderman of the most Irish ward in the city (the south-side first ward) as well as in the state assembly, while McManus was a well-known banker and real estate agent. Both were wired into the local networks of the Democratic Party and served also as executive members of the Buffalo Circle of the Catholic Union, whose aims included the promotion and maintenance of "a spirit of devotion to the Holy Father," the sustenance of "Catholic rights" and the promotion of "just and fair legislation in relation to the Church in America."<sup>42</sup>

Another organization that brought Chambers and McManus into contact with other young Irish-American men, however, was the Young Men's Catholic Association (YMCA). Through lectures, excursions, debates, and other entertainments, the object of the YMCA was to produce among the members "a wise, harmonious, and well-regulated public opinion or rather judgment on all matters, temporal or spiritual, affecting the interests of the Church of God, dearer to us than our lives."<sup>43</sup> While this also reflected the sort of readership the *Catholic Union* sought to mold, Bishop Ryan's expressed hope that the YMCA would become an outlet "where the young men of all nationalities and from the different parishes could congregate" was medium-run thinking at best. McManus served as YMCA president in 1872, and when the association's headquarters of St. Stephen's Hall was completed in 1875 with plans to feature a portrait of famed Irish poet Thomas Moore in the center of a Renaissance-style fresco on its ceiling, its cultural stamp was clear.<sup>44</sup> Published lists of officers in city directories as well as that of the 112 members involved in an 1876 excursion committee offer further indications of a body of men of mostly Irish birth or ancestry.<sup>45</sup> It was scarcely surprising, then, that when a need for enlarged facilities arose, the *Catholic Union* moved its headquarters to St. Stephen's Hall in April 1875.<sup>46</sup> Its president that year, Irish-born James Mooney, would be an important generator of Irish diasporic nationalist energy in Buffalo in the early 1880s; he was also a subscriber to Patrick Ford's *Irish World*.<sup>47</sup>

When J. Edmund Burke stepped down as editor of the *Catholic Union* for family-related reasons in April 1874, Bishop Ryan did not have far to search for a replacement. Over the coming years, Rev. Patrick Cronin (1835-1905) would establish himself as not only a formidable commentator on church-related issues but also a fiercely patriotic defender of Ireland's right to realize its dream of national independence. Unlike Burke, Cronin was Irish-born, spending his early years in Pallaskenry, County Limerick.<sup>48</sup> Having lost his mother at an early age, Cronin departed Ireland with his father during the height of the famine at fourteen years old. After being ordained and serving as a priest in Missouri, Cronin's talents at oratory and the written word were recognized when he was offered the Chair of Rhetoric at the Seminary of Our Lady of Angels at Suspension Bridge, New York (present-day Niagara Falls) in 1870. Cronin's memories of his early years in Ireland were no doubt dominated by the experience of famine in the vicinity of Pallaskenry. The district suffered a population loss of between 20 and 50 percent between 1841 and 1851, while County Limerick as a whole experienced above-average rates of agrarian and famine-related protest.<sup>49</sup> Who knows the extent of the stories related to the young Cronin about the departure of other families from the district besides his own, or other tales of eviction or confinement to overcrowded workhouses? Workhouses were built in not only nearby Limerick City but also regional towns such as Rathkeale, Newcastle West, and Glin.<sup>50</sup>

As an expert on rhetoric, Cronin was more than capable of formulating his own anticolonial laments for Ireland. Those reading a *Catholic Union* account of his 1874 St. Patrick's Day sermon, delivered at a solemn high mass in Detroit, could not have failed to be impressed; some were

likely also amused by his melodramatic style. His introductory remarks invited listeners to let their “hearts wander back over the sea” and “dream over the grey ruins of crumbled cross or convent turret,” to think of “King Brian, whom a hundred harps hailed wildly at Clontarf, but who returned to know no more” and then “float down the azure waters of the Shannon to Limerick” while being “proud of Sarsfield’s sword that flashed within its ancient walls.”<sup>51</sup> Cronin’s conclusion, however, positioned Catholicism as a central inspirational force in the long-run survival of a distinctive and separate Irish identity, and provides important insight into his editorial policy and his later participation in U.S.-based activism on behalf of Ireland:

The days of an ancient Erin have long since fled. Her sceptre, like that of Judah, is wielded by another. She hath wept and her tears are of her cheek. Her laws are gone. Her dwellings are desolate. Her children cry for bread all the day long, and the gems she once wore round her fair and youthful brow now adorn the crown of a stranger. But oh! There is one thing they could never tear from her – one which, in her darkest hour, she clings to with all the endearments of affection rendered more tender by sorrow, and that is her faith!<sup>52</sup>

If Burke had effectively woven Irish affairs into the pages of the *Catholic Union*, Cronin took this editorial policy to a new level. Within two months of his maiden editorial, readers were treated to a continuous stream of writings about the history and geography of Ireland sourced from the *Dublin Nation* and other like outlets. One article with the headline “The Island of Saints: Most Picturesque Land on the Globe” discussed ancient Irish monuments such as the Rock of Cashel, Monasterboice, and St. Kevin’s Monastery in Glendalough.<sup>53</sup> About a month later, a full-length piece on Glendalough appeared.<sup>54</sup> Articles on the city of Cork and the “wilds of Donegal” were also published during these months alongside pieces on eighteenth-century orator and politician John Philpot Curran, writer William Carleton, and Young Irelander Thomas Davis.<sup>55</sup> Poetry ranged from “The Death of Connor Macnessa – Monarch of Ireland” by T.D. Sullivan to “Evicted” by Daniel Connelly.<sup>56</sup> In later years, readers would be reminded of the wish of Curran’s colleague, Henry Grattan, first expressed in 1780, “but to breathe, in this our island, in common with my fellow-subjects, the air of liberty” in addition to his resolution to never be satisfied “so long as the meanest cottager in Ireland has a link of the British chain clanking to his rags.”<sup>57</sup> The cultural idea of an Irish nation, summoned by landscape, poetic, and folkloric imagery, became coupled with a desire for a reassertion of political sovereignty and statehood that, beyond the return of a Dublin parliament, remained quite vague in content.

As the Irish Home Rule movement gained momentum in the mid 1870s, speeches from its leader, Isaac Butt, and others were published in the *Catholic Union* (Figure 1). Readers’ awareness of the physical-force tradition in Irish nationalism was revived occasionally, however, and the paper was unimpressed with Jeremiah O’Donovan Rossa’s appeal for “skirmishing” funds in the early months of 1876, for example. Though the *Irish World* notably took up Rossa’s cause, and some funds from Buffalo became channeled to Patrick Ford’s paper, Cronin agreed with the recently deceased Young Irelander John Mitchel in taking a dim view of Fenianism and “the new scheming devices of irresponsible adventurers.”<sup>58</sup> Yet when news broke about the rescue of six imprisoned Fenians in Western Australia and their transportation to the United States aboard the whaler *Catalpa*, Cronin’s editorial asked: “Is there anyone—any Irishman at least—who does not heartily rejoice at the recent escape of the Fenian prisoners? We believe not; and we do no [sic] wish to believe that there is.”<sup>59</sup> A story about gallant Irishmen defying Britain and its navy was too good to resist, and not long after, accounts of the rescue and escape featured in the newspaper. Though the *Catholic Union* rejoiced of there being “noble manhood still in Ireland’s sons,” its editorial also urged prayers that “good God may guard them from the claws of the corrupt blatherers.”<sup>60</sup>





By the late 1870s, a network of *Catholic Union* agents covering more than twenty towns in western New York State was in place, with priests assuming this role in several localities.<sup>63</sup> An 1877 advert in the *Buffalo City Directory* described the paper as “the acknowledged medium of address to Catholics” throughout “Middle and Western New York.”<sup>64</sup> Lists of remittance submitters published in various issues throughout the first half of 1879 suggest the circulation to be approximately two thousand; one wonders what the figure might have looked like were it not for the economically depressed years endured since 1873. More than one third of subscribers came from Buffalo and more than 40 percent of these in turn lived on the streets of the city’s southern wards where a recognizably Irish stamp was present (Table 1).<sup>65</sup> An analysis of subscriber surnames provides further evidence of a largely Irish readership. Not only is there a near-absence of German names in the lists, but the most common surnames (with ten or more individual entries) are Sullivan, Smith, Ryan, Murphy, and McCarthy.<sup>66</sup> The “Irish News” column became subdivided by county after August 1876, though this did not mean that all of Ireland’s thirty-two counties featured in this section in every issue.



Source	Number	Percentage
Buffalo	314	35.0
<i>Southern "Irish" wards (1,2,3,13)</i>	130	14.5
<i>Elsewhere in city</i>	184	20.5
Rochester	55	6.1
Lockport	37	4.1
Batavia	26	2.9
Elsewhere in New York State	396	44.2
Other U.S. states	31	3.5
Canada	6	0.7
Unknown	31	3.5
Total	896	100.0

**Table 1.** Sources of subscribers to the *Catholic Union*, January 1-June 30, 1879 (*Catholic Union*, various issues, January-June 1879).

The paper's circulation field within western New York included Rochester while covering the numerous small communities on the southern Alleghany Plateau bordering Pennsylvania. In small settlements such as Belfast, Cuba, and New Ireland (dubbed "Ireland" in the subscription lists), Irish men and women received copies of the *Catholic Union* as well as those residing in towns such as Lockport, Batavia, Medina, Le Roy and South Byron, on the plain between Buffalo and Rochester. Ten years earlier, reports on the progress of local Fenian "circles" in places like Batavia appeared in the pages of the *Fenian Volunteer*; while the consumption of Irish news, history and culture had continued in such localities, changes in their readers' attitudes toward advanced Irish nationalism are harder to track.<sup>67</sup> Beyond this core hinterland, other readers lived in New York City, Brooklyn, Boston, San Francisco, towns in Midwestern states, and Canadian cities such as Ottawa and Halifax.<sup>68</sup> While the vast majority of subscription remittances were reported at the scale of the individual, newspapers circulated not only within, but also frequently between, households. There were also institutional subscribers such as branches of the Catholic Mutual Benefit Association and the Sisters of Mercy. While subscribers were mostly male, 160 were either individual women or orders of nuns. The transmission of nationalist ideas was never simply the domain of men. In the wider scheme of things, however, the circulation of the *Catholic Union* paled when compared to heavyweights such as the *Irish World* and *Boston Pilot*.<sup>69</sup> The *World's* circulation had grown to more than twenty-five thousand in less than ten years, while the *Pilot's* was at least fifty thousand.<sup>70</sup>

Although the *Catholic Union's* opening editorial proclaimed its place within the process of building the infrastructure of a Catholic English-speaking community in Buffalo, what emerged within the first eight years was a newspaper largely oriented to the Irish in the city and its region, one whose editorial policy kept them informed of social and political issues in the homeland while educating them on its history and people. All in all, a vision of Ireland as an island in the eastern Atlantic whose ancient laws, traditions, and landscapes had been all but destroyed by seven centuries of colonialism had become fortified. The paper was locally produced and had a largely regional field of circulation, but it became drawn into both national and transatlantic geographies of press and political activity. Its readership was regularly encouraged to think, and to then presumably talk, about the Irish nation as a legitimate cultural and political phenomenon.

Cronin's intervention into the question of Ireland's future reached new heights, however, as it became clear that his country of birth was suffering a major agricultural and humanitarian crisis in the autumn of 1879. Within eighteen months, Cronin would spearhead committees to host the new face of Home Rule, Charles Stewart Parnell, administer the collection of funds for Irish relief, occupy a vice-presidential position in the Irish National Land League of America (INLLA), and promote the formation of branches of that organization within "Irish" parishes in Buffalo.<sup>71</sup> The visit of Parnell in January 1880 momentarily elevated the level of diasporic engagement among those of Irish origin. Parnell's months in the United States and Canada took in more than sixty cities and was cut short only by the calling of a general election in the United Kingdom. Though the rural depression of 1879 and the possibility of renewed famine framed his mission, Parnell nonetheless reminded his listeners in Buffalo and elsewhere of the wider political struggle for Irish nationhood and the ending of the estate system of land ownership in Ireland. He also notably celebrated the fact of how in traveling across the Atlantic, he had come to find "a great Ireland in America."<sup>72</sup>

The consequences of a shared Irishness within the YMCA ranks also became apparent when prominent members came to the fore in committees struck to collect relief funds and establish Land League branches. James Mooney was the most notable in this regard, but he was also a member of the Clan na Gael, a North American organization supportive of revolution in Ireland whose mission was to ensure a presence if not a dominance within the expanding network of American Land League branches.<sup>73</sup> Clan na Gael also took the lead in organizing Parnell's itinerary, and the resolutions and reception committees struck to welcome Parnell in Buffalo, moreover, included one Patrick O'Day, very likely the old *Fenian Volunteer* publisher.<sup>74</sup> In 1882, as if to illustrate the Clan's success at infiltration, Mooney became president of the INLLA. Cronin, meanwhile, ensured that each new development across the Atlantic was given coverage in the newspaper and, when appropriate, editorialized with his usual fire. For months after the Parnell visit, the paper faithfully recorded individual and group contributions to the Parnell Irish Relief Fund by city ward, published the views of nationalist writers such as the Nun of Kenmare on the state of Ireland, and covered in detail the founding of Land League branches in the city the following year.<sup>75</sup> With both Cronin and Mooney influential in the organization, the first annual convention of the INLLA took place in Buffalo in January 1881 where St. James' Hall "was decorated with emerald banners and the stars and stripes."<sup>76</sup> No less than twelve columns were devoted to a mass meeting held in the city the following month to protest what would become the Protection of Person and Property Act. This enactment of the latest coercion bill in Ireland prompted a familiar first resolution that reminded those assembled of "eight hundred years of merciless persecution."<sup>77</sup>

By 1885, Rowell's *American Newspaper Directory* designated the circulation of what was now the *Catholic Union and Times* to be not greater than ten thousand, putting it on a par with the *Irish Canadian* but still in the second division compared to the *World* and *Pilot*.<sup>78</sup> Through the previous decade and more, the newspaper had played an important role in framing and structuring a diasporic nationalism among sections of the Buffalo Irish. While supporting constitutional efforts to find a solution to the Irish question, it retained interest in, and at times sympathy for, men who had preferred more violent responses. An important element within the popular anticolonial nationalism it promoted, however, was the selection and glorification of Irish heroes. By the second half of the 1880s, one hero in particular had acquired special status – Robert Emmet.

Many Irish Buffalonians, and certainly their literate middle-class leaders, were aware of the narrative of Emmet's life and sacrifices by the time of his centenary in 1878. The small Irish elite had long toasted him at St. Patrick's Day dinners and, as mentioned, a portrait of his boyhood friend Thomas Moore was planned to occupy the center of the ceiling of St. Stephen's

Hall. From the era of the famine immigration until the late 1850s, at least nine separate editions of three different Emmet biographies were published in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Charleston, South Carolina, and some of this material likely made its way to Buffalo.<sup>79</sup> In at least one extant issue of 1868, the *Fenian Volunteer*, dutiful to the last, printed Emmet's famous final words where he forbade his epitaph from being written "until Ireland takes her place among the nations of the earth."<sup>80</sup> By the mid 1870s, a so-called Emmet Benevolent Association was in existence in the city, likely the creation of local Clan na Gael members or supporters, and it periodically organized entertainments and lectures to raise funds to aid the Fenians rescued from Australia.<sup>81</sup> Emmet had potential to serve not only as a point of reference for how the Buffalo Irish (and their sympathizers) thought about Irish independence but also for how the Irish were to be (favorably) placed within the American polity through the parallels drawn between him and that other well-known anticolonial, George Washington. If the project of mobilizing Irish pride was to remain vital, Emmet was a more than useful symbol.

The visible elevation of selected Irish heroes above a general pantheon was less straightforward than it may seem, however. In August 1875, Buffalonians of Irish origin were invited to acknowledge the centennial of Daniel O'Connell, and the *Catholic Union* reported enthusiastically on the "world-wide celebration" honoring the man known as Ireland's "Liberator."<sup>82</sup> Uncertain weather conditions seemingly put paid to the possibility of an outdoor celebration, and so a pontifical mass at St. Joseph's Cathedral was combined with a lecture in St. James' Hall by Rev. P.N. Lynch, the Bishop of Charleston. The latter was a decidedly respectable affair, with Bishop Ryan present on the platform alongside the Mayor, a number of judges, a local Irish-born alderman, and other dignitaries.<sup>83</sup> While those assembled appreciated Bishop Lynch's reminder that "the penal code was like a dark cloud" in Ireland at the time of O'Connell's birth, the clergyman's discussion of O'Connell's achievements concentrated largely on Catholic Emancipation. Lynch had nothing to say about O'Connell's efforts to secure the repeal of the Act of Union binding Britain and Ireland since 1801, and summed O'Connell up as "one who appealed to reason and logic, and not brute force and bribery."<sup>84</sup> The contrast to the violent approach advocated by the Fenians and Young Irelanders was doubtless not lost on listeners and readers. Although Rev. Cronin was not present to hear Lynch (he spoke at the corresponding celebration in Detroit), a subsequent *Catholic Union* editorial concluded with an expression of surprise and pain "at the ungrateful apathy displayed by our countrymen in this city on the occasion of the centennial anniversary of [O'Connell's] birth."<sup>85</sup>

Three years later, the centenary of Emmet's birth was marked by the YMCA through a recreation of his infamous trial. In what may have been a dry run of sorts, a performance of the trial was staged in St. Stephen's Hall the previous July 1877 and was attended by "a very large audience" though the reenactment was felt by the *Catholic Union* correspondent to have "many defects."<sup>86</sup> On this occasion, the role of Emmet was played by ex-president John McManus, who was joined by no less than thirty-two other cast members, all men. The primary defect was the evident (and somewhat ironic) failure to sufficiently capture "the true appearance of a British law court" within the hall; the journalist mocked "the gathering together of all the lawyers both for crown and accused at one small table in left centre, as though they were playing a game of poker on the sly" and described the costumes (the judge's excepted) as "farcical."<sup>87</sup> Such language, if nothing else, points to the experimental aspects associated with the production of a diasporic spectacle. If, as Paul Connerton argues, habit is a vitally important component in the production of collective memory, these Irish activists were not yet habituated enough in facing the challenge of publicly commemorating Emmet beyond the toasts of St. Patrick's Day dinners.<sup>88</sup> Though the subsequent attempt to recreate the trial at St. James' Hall in March 1878 was judged to have "passed off quite creditably," the diocesan organ felt that it would have attracted "a larger audience" but





for "the lack of sufficient advertising."<sup>89</sup> McManus did not return in the role of Emmet; he now acted as one of Emmet's two counsels with the role of the Great Man assumed by YMCA financial secretary James Murphy.<sup>90</sup> Onstage participation was also stripped down somewhat, with only fourteen men taking part.

The St. James' Hall event did not spell the end of Emmet-related activities in Buffalo in his centenary year, however. While American lithographers were busy producing at least three different images of Emmet at this time, his execution was pictured in prints sold by the Buffalo-based Gies and Company.<sup>91</sup> Also, in November 1878, the Forrest Dramatic Company presented a three-act play about Emmet for the benefit of the Church of the Immaculate Conception. This was the play written by James Pilgrim and produced in New York on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of Emmet's death in 1853.<sup>92</sup> It is not known how accepting Buffalonians were of a play in which Emmet's love interest was not Sarah Curran but "his wife" Maria, and those now critically attuned to representations of the "stage Irishman" may well have winced at the sight of "Darby O'Gaff, a sprig of the Emerald Isle." And though the play did at least close with Emmet's final words to stir the blood of the audience, the force of his language was likely soon diluted by the "laughable farce" of "The Widow's Victim" that followed on to close out the evening.

Some Irish households in Buffalo received their understandings of Emmet's legacy from more than just the *Catholic Union*, local lithographers, and travelling stage companies, however. The *Irish World* was a rapidly rising star in the Irish-American press and had a readership in Buffalo as in many other American places. The image of Emmet's execution it published in 1879 (Figure 2), crude as it is, likely paralleled what Gies and Company was offering, and the paper also characteristically exaggerated the sense of an Irish America rising simultaneously in celebration of Emmet's 101st. Aside from the largest cities, the *World* reported on celebrations in Newark, New Haven, St. Louis, Indianapolis, New Orleans, Charleston, and many other places. The levels of participation at these affairs did not always merit "mass meeting" status, however. In Buffalo, for example, the Irish Rifles and Emmet Benevolent Association celebrated Emmet's 101st birthday in the city's downtown armory at which "Emmet's speech was recited with much force and vigor by Mr. M.J. Sullivan of Company A, I.R."<sup>93</sup>

The *Irish World* also clarified to its readership why Emmet was a worthier figure of celebration for supporters of Irish nationhood than O'Connell. Whereas George Washington and William Tell were honored for their respective rebellions against tyranny, the *World* declared O'Connell to be "*an avowed British subject and not an Irish Nationalist*; and during the fifty years he was on the political stage, he never once expressed a contrary wish. Not once!"<sup>94</sup> O'Connell's pacifism did not hold him in good stead in this account, and his movement to repeal the Act of Union was argued to leave the Irish still "fast bound to the throne of England."<sup>95</sup> Defining a nation as "the unity of a people inhabiting a common country, and owing allegiance to and protected by one government under a common flag," Emmet was in contrast lauded by the *Irish World* as "the fittest type of the principle of Irish Nationality known to the men of this generation."<sup>96</sup> Unlike Emmet, O'Connell did not fit comfortably, if at all, within the ranks of anticolonial Irishmen. It was no surprise, for example, that a precursor to the Fenian Brotherhood, formed in New York in early 1855 by ex-Young Irelander Michael Doheny, was named the Emmet Monument Association, or that the twenty men arrested in Cincinnati in January of the following year for planning a filibustering mission to Ireland were members of a "Robert Emmet Club."<sup>97</sup>

Public commemorations to Emmet in Buffalo were not especially marked for some years after his 101st birthday. A lecture and concert took place in 1880, though the recent Parnell visit likely concentrated most peoples' attention; the early months of 1881 witnessed the formation of Land League branches in the city, and in 1883, the anniversary was overshadowed by a Land League meeting held to raise money for the alleviation of hunger in southern and western

Ireland.<sup>98</sup> Although "exercises" had been prepared "in honor of Emmet's birthday" by the branch, the length of the meeting precluded them from being undertaken.<sup>99</sup> In 1884, Bishop John Ireland of Minnesota passed through the city at the same time as John Redmond, a member of Parnell's Irish Party in Westminster, though it was the former whose message commanded widespread coverage in the *Catholic Union and Times*. In 1885, attempts to collect for Parnell's recently-launched Parliamentary Fund to pay the salaries of Irish Party members in Westminster seem to have preoccupied Cronin and his lay activist colleagues. These efforts paid dividends on a wider scale; as Michael Keyes has recently claimed, "the 1885 election, with its unprecedented eighty-six seats for the Irish Party, was funded more or less exclusively by American money."<sup>100</sup>

The first Emmet commemoration of any significance in Buffalo since 1880 does not, therefore, seem to have taken place until March 1886 when the Irish Party held the balance of power at Westminster and a bill concerning Home Rule was imminent. The affair, held at St. Stephen's Hall, was organized by the local branch (403) of the Irish National League of America (INLA), the successor of the INLLA now focused on the return of a Dublin parliament rather than land reform, and proceeds were again to be donated to Parnell's parliamentary fund. Cronin chaired the entertainment committee, one of several struck to organize the event.<sup>101</sup> A *Catholic Union and Times* editorial was unambiguous in its message that Emmet "stands first in the gloried ranks of Ireland's patriot martyrs who [...] yielded up his golden life, with Spartan fortitude, for his enslaved and buffeted Motherland."<sup>102</sup> No amateur attempt was made to reconstruct Emmet's trial on this occasion. Among the evening's attendees were Mayor Philip Becker, diplomat James Putnam, and local intellectual Rowland B. Mahany. The program opened "with a medley of Irish airs, beautifully played by Professor Poppenburg's superb orchestra" with the eulogies to Emmet delivered by Mahany and Putnam, both of whom were American born and of the belief that the recent successes of the Home Rule and Land League movements, for which they praised Parnell and British Prime Minister William Gladstone, would speed the writing of Emmet's epitaph.<sup>103</sup> Mahany chose language familiar to his listenership: "For Ireland the battle of freedom is well-nigh won. The struggle of centuries is drawing to a close, a struggle illumined on the one side by undying and heroic patriotism, and on the other darkened by oppression so merciless and fearful, that philanthropy might well seem banished from a world quiescent in the perpetration of such crime."<sup>104</sup> When seen from the distance of an American republic increasingly comfortable in its diplomatic relations with Britain, this sense of the speedy arrival of self-government in Ireland was optimistic, even if its supporters were aware of the House of Lords veto. Yet the bill was defeated in the House of Commons in June, precipitating a split in Gladstone's Liberal party.

Political setbacks on the eastern side of the Atlantic did not spell the end of diasporic engagement among Buffalonians of Irish origin, but it remained incumbent upon the small network of leaders headed by Cronin and Mooney to keep this going. They did so, and retained Emmet anniversaries for the purpose. Branch 403 of the INLA assumed organizational duties once more in 1887 and 1888, having elected Civil War veteran Anselm J. Smith as president. Born in Toronto, Smith had taken part in the production of the Emmet trial in 1878, acting as one of the accused's lawyers.<sup>105</sup> In 1888, Buffalo attorney P.W. Lawler took to the podium at St. Stephen's Hall for that year's commemoration where a "handsome oil painting of Emmet hung over the platform" and his final words were "spread upon a white banner extending the width of the hall."<sup>106</sup> While Lawler was sure to use these words in a speech in which he positioned Emmet as "the guiding spirit" in Ireland's struggle for "national independence," he also structured his narrative so as to juxtapose the persistence of British colonialism in Ireland alongside the progress made by the Irish in America.<sup>107</sup> With the Plan of Campaign against landlords ongoing in Ireland, Lawler related how the purpose of rackrenting was "to accomplish the people's ruin [...] their little homes, the last refuge from the piercing winter's blast, are razed to the ground, while the

aged and hoary sire struggling in the grasp of death is begging, praying that he may be permitted to die beneath the roof where he was born, or dragged upon the wayside to breathe his last on earth."<sup>108</sup> Cronin could hardly have written it better. At the same time, Lawler reiterated Irish contributions to the American Revolution and Civil War, arguing that "their love and duty to the land of their adoption are none the less true because they cling with fond and endearing [sic] recollection to the land of their nativity. They are a fixture here, they are a part and parcel of this country, they have contributed materially to its development as they have to the preservation of its institutions."<sup>109</sup> That passage was not far from the words chosen by J. Edmund Burke in his final editorial for the *Catholic Union* in 1874, but it would not have been out of place in the *Fenian Volunteer* either. The Emmet commemorations of these years, then, offered spectacles of Irish-American diaspora nationalism where intergenerational (and mostly male) bonds were strengthened in such a way that ensured, at the very least, the active transfer of ideas about Irish ethnic exceptionalism in Buffalo. The Irish remained a distinctive group in America, and appreciable numbers of them, including the American born, continued to take an active interest in the course of Anglo-Irish politics as well as aspects of Irish culture, past and present.

Public remembrances of Emmet in Buffalo continued into the 1890s and early 1900s, organized for the most part by newly formed divisions of the Irish Catholic fraternal order, the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH). Audiences and stage performers alike were indeed becoming habituated to the practice of remembering Emmet. The 1903 centennial of Emmet's final year was, however, marked by rival events in the city, as the moderate Home Rule-supporting resolutions passed at the AOH event were countered by the militant "Irish Nationalists" taking their cues from the recently-reunited Clan na Gael.<sup>110</sup> The AOH and Nationalists continued to honor Emmet in the years leading up to the First World War as the political situation in Ireland became more fraught. In the aftermath of the 1916 Rising in Dublin and the execution of fifteen of its leaders, however, a new set of martyrs who had laid down their lives for Irish freedom were now set to be recognized and commemorated.<sup>111</sup> In this latest phase of diaspora-making in Buffalo and other American places, the Irish nationalist pantheon was reconfigured.

In seeking to elucidate how projects aimed at shaping an Irish "diaspora consciousness" were undertaken in Buffalo in the 1870s and 1880s through the lens of material culture and public events, this paper has argued that the regular circulation of ideas about Irish-related things depended upon the time and money of a small group of promoters and activists, spiritual and lay, whose concerns often extended to other areas, such as the ongoing cultivation of a respectable public Catholicism and loyalty to American institutions. In its depiction of how the webs of interaction between committed individuals in this social field served to structure and underline a group-level consciousness in one place, the paper has also sought to show how a local picture connected to wider geographies. The patterns of reading and remembrance discussed in Buffalo were paralleled in other North American cities in ways that provided the foundations of a network within which Irish diaspora nationalism could retain vitality after the death of Parnell in 1891 and the onset of lean years in the Irish nationalist movement. This network that shaped a coherent Irish diaspora consciousness thus contained within it a series of creative and experimental projects that also possessed local, regional, and inter-city dynamics. Within its Buffalo node, the YMCA, the *Catholic Union*, and Robert Emmet all played important roles at different times in the projection of an Irish-American community that, although largely focused on its immediate situation in the United States, continued to cast its eyes at varied levels of intensity on the affairs of the homeland. This mattered to the ongoing construction of what Charles Stewart Parnell regarded as a "great Ireland in America" not least because, for all of his efforts and the hope they generated, Ireland's political dilemmas remained unresolved. It also mattered that, despite the presentation of Protestant Irish heroes such as Emmet, Parnell, Henry Grattan, Thomas Davis, John Mitchel, and others in text and performance, the consuming and approving audience was largely Catholic.

## NOTES

- 1 Rogers Brubaker, "[The 'Diaspora' Diaspora](#)," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28, no. 1 (2005): 1-19, 1.
- 2 Brubaker, "The 'Diaspora' Diaspora," 13.
- 3 Martin Sökefeld, "[Mobilizing in Transnational Space](#)," *Global Networks* 6, no. 3 (2006): 265-284, 277.
- 4 See, for example, the chapters in Section VI "The Scattering," in *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine*, eds. John Crowley, William J. Smyth, and Mike Murphy (Cork: Cork University Press, 2012), 492-567. For a critical take on the use of the term diaspora in historical writing on Irish emigration, see Donald Harman Akenson, "Diaspora, the Irish, and Irish Nationalism," in *The Call of the Homeland: Diaspora Nationalisms, Past and Present*, eds. Allon Gal, Athena S. Leoussi, and Anthony D. Smith (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010), 169-217.
- 5 See Kevin Kenny, *Diaspora: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). The classic study of an "exile motif" within Irish emigrant correspondence is Kerby A. Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).
- 6 Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Special Sorrows: The Diasporic Imagination of Irish, Polish, and Jewish Immigrants in the United States* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1995).
- 7 See Timothy J. Meagher, "Irish American Nationalism," in Meagher, *The Columbia Guide to Irish American History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 198-213.
- 8 Sökefeld, "Mobilizing in Transnational Space," 266.
- 9 Kenny, *Diaspora: A Very Short Introduction*, 12.
- 10 Elizabeth Mavroudi, "[Diaspora as Process: \(De\)Constructing Boundaries](#)," *Geography Compass* 1, no. 3 (2007): 467-79. For other geographical perspectives, see Caitríona Ní Laoire, "[Introduction: Locating Geographies of Diaspora](#)," *International Journal of Population Geography* 9, no. 4 (2003): 275-280.
- 11 See William Leonard Joyce, "Editors and Ethnicity: A History of the Irish-American Press, 1848-1883," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1974, 19-73.
- 12 Cian T. McMahon, "Did the Irish 'Become White'? Global Migration and National Identity, 1842-1877," Ph.D. dissertation, Carnegie Mellon University, 2010, 291. The *Pilot's* circulation was circa forty-five thousand, that of the *Irish American* circa thirty-five thousand.
- 13 The concept of interpellation emanates from Louis Althusser, but its application here draws from Gerry Kearns "Nationalism and the Public Sphere: *The Nation Newspaper* and the Movement for the Repeal of the Union," in *At the Anvil: Essays in Honour of William J. Smyth*, eds. Patrick J. Duffy and William Nolan (Dublin: Geography Publications, 2012), 393-419.
- 14 See Charles Fanning, "[Robert Emmet and Nineteenth-Century Irish America](#)," *New Hibernia Review*, 8, no. 4 (2004): 53-83.
- 15 Marianne Elliott, *Robert Emmet: The Making of a Legend* (London: Profile Books, 2004).
- 16 For a discussion of attempts made by Irish and Irish-American nationalists, possessed of such anticolonial sentiment, to influence U.S. diplomatic relations with Britain between the 1840s and 1880s, see David Sim, *A Union Forever: The Irish Question and U.S. Foreign Relations in the Victorian Age* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013).
- 17 Geoffrey Cubitt, "Introduction: Heroic Reputations and Exemplary Lives," in *Heroic Reputations and Exemplary Lives*, eds. Geoffrey Cubitt and Allen Warren (Manchester, United Kingdom: Manchester University Press, 2000), 3.
- 18 Cubitt, "Introduction: Heroic Reputations and Exemplary Lives," 3.
- 19 The term "national assets" is taken from Cubitt, "Introduction: Heroic Reputations and Exemplary Lives," 18.



- 20 Donald M. MacRaild, "'Diaspora' and Transnationalism: Theory and Evidence in Explanation of the Irish World-Wide," *Irish Economic and Social History* 38, no. 1 (2006): 51-58, 55.
- 21 See Michael Keyes, *Funding the Nation: Money and Nationalist Politics in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 2011).
- 22 Joyce, "Editors and Ethnicity," 154.
- 23 The term "ex-plebe" is taken from Robert Dahl, *Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1961), 32-51.
- 24 Andrew P. Yox, "Bonds of Community: Buffalo's German Element, 1853-1871," *New York History* (April 1985): 141-163.
- 25 "Bishop Ryan," *Catholic Union*, 5 March 1879: 5. For more on the background of Irish settlement in Buffalo, see William Jenkins, *Between Raid and Rebellion: the Irish in Buffalo and Toronto, 1867-1916* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013).
- 26 "A Native of the German Empire," *Catholic Union*, 30 March 1876: 5.
- 27 For more on these raids, see Hereward Senior, *The Last Invasion of Canada: the Fenian Raids 1866-1870* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1991) and Peter Vronsky, *Ridgeway: The American Fenian Invasion and the 1866 Battle that made Canada* (Toronto: Allen Lane Canada, 2011). The Buffalo Irish response is discussed briefly in Jenkins, *Between Raid and Rebellion*, 183-4.
- 28 See *History of the City of Buffalo and Erie County, Volume 2*, ed. H. Perry Smith (Syracuse: D. Mason & Co., 1884), 350. I am also grateful to Michael Peterman of Trent University for information on the O'Day-McCarroll partnership.
- 29 "Formation of 'Circles,'" *Fenian Volunteer*, 24 August 1867: 2. For more on McCarroll, see Michael Peterman, "From Terry Finnegan to Terry Fenian: The Truncated Literary Career of James McCarroll," in *Irish Nationalism in Canada*, ed. David A. Wilson (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009), 140-59. Extant copies of the *Fenian Volunteer* are available at the National Library of Ireland, Dublin.
- 30 "Formation of 'Circles,'" *Fenian Volunteer*, 24 August 1867: 2.
- 31 "Our City Circulation," *Fenian Volunteer*, 4 January 1868: 3.
- 32 "Important to Advertisers," *Fenian Volunteer*, 15 February 1868: 4.
- 33 See <http://www.nli.ie/en/NewspapersDetails.aspx?IndexNo=10554> (accessed 28 June 2014).
- 34 These were the *Demokrat* (established 1837), the *Freie Presse* (1855), and the *Volksfreund* (1868). See George P. Rowell & Co's *American Newspaper Directory* (New York: George P. Rowell and Co., 1879), 220.
- 35 See "What They Think of Us," *Catholic Union*, 13 June 1872: 4, and "Death of J. Edmund Burke," 18 January 1877: 4.
- 36 "Salutatory!," *Catholic Union*, 25 April 1872: 4.
- 37 "The Catholic Union, A Weekly Journal," *Catholic Union*, 20 March 1873: 1.
- 38 "The Catholic Union, A Weekly Journal," *Catholic Union*, 20 March 1873: 1.
- 39 "The Duty of Catholics to Support a Catholic Press," *Catholic Union*, 23 May 1872: 4. Original emphasis.
- 40 "Death of J. Edmund Burke," *Catholic Union*, 18 January 1877: 4.
- 41 "Valedictory," *Catholic Union*, 2 April 1874: 4.
- 42 "The Buffalo Circle of the Catholic Union," *Catholic Union*, 16 May 1872: 4.
- 43 "St. Stephen's Hall - Young Men's Excursion," *Catholic Union*, 22 June 1876: 4.
- 44 "Fine Frescoing," *Buffalo Courier*, 26 October 1875: 2.
- 45 For Bishop Ryan's sentiments, see "Bishop Ryan," *Catholic Union*, 5 March 1879: 5; excursion data is provided in "Young Men's Excursion," *Catholic Union*, 22 June 1876: 8.

- 46 "Our New Volume - Ourselves," *Catholic Union*, 22 April 1875: 4.
- 47 Mooney is listed as a subscriber in *Irish World*, 19 February 1876.
- 48 The following details of Cronin's early life are taken from Grace Carew Sheldon, "Buffalo of the Olden Time," *Buffalo Times*, 30 November 1909.
- 49 William J. Smyth, "The Province of Munster and the Great Famine" in *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine*, eds. John Crowley, William J. Smyth, and Mike Murphy (Cork: Cork University Press, 2012), 359-370, 368.
- 50 Glin was an auxiliary workhouse housing between 400 and 800 inmates; the Limerick City and Newcastle West workhouses housed between 2000 and 4250 people in contrast. See Figure 5 in Smyth, "The Province of Munster," 363.
- 51 "St. Patrick's Day in Detroit - Sermon by Rev. Fr. Cronin of Buffalo," *Catholic Union*, 26 March 1874: 5.
- 52 "St. Patrick's Day in Detroit - Sermon by Rev. Fr. Cronin of Buffalo," *Catholic Union*, 26 March 1874: 5.
- 53 "The Island of Saints: Most Picturesque Land on the Globe," *Catholic Union*, 21 May 1874: 2.
- 54 "Glendalough," *Catholic Union*, 18 June 1874: 3.
- 55 These articles appeared in the *Catholic Union* in the following order: "The City of Cork," 30 April 1874: 3; "The Wilds of Donegal," 28 May, 1874: 3; "John Philpot Curran," 23 April, 1874: 6; "William Carleton," 25 June, 1874: 6; and "Thomas Davis," 7 May 1874: 2-3.
- 56 T.D. Sullivan, "The Death of Connor Mac Nessa - Monarch of Ireland," *Catholic Union*, 16 April 1874: 2; and Daniel Connelly, "Evicted," *Catholic Union*, 23 April 1874: 2.
- 57 "Henry Grattan on the Duty of Irishmen," *Catholic Union*, 6 April 1876: 7.
- 58 "Salutary Home Truths," *Catholic Union*, 13 April 1876: 4. Cronin admired Mitchel and serialized the latter's *Jail Journal* in the paper in the spring and summer of 1875 following his death. For more on Rossa's Skirmishing Fund and the *Irish World*, see Niall Whelehan, "[Skirmishing, The Irish World, and Empire, 1876-86](#)," *Eire-Ireland*, 42, nos. 1-2 (Spring-Summer 2007): 180-200; and Adrian N. Mulligan, "[A Forgotten 'Greater Ireland': The Transnational Development of Irish Nationalism](#)," *Scottish Geographical Journal*, 118, no. 3 (2002): 219-34.
- 59 "The Escaped Fenians," *Catholic Union*, 22 June 1876: 4.
- 60 "The Escaped Fenians," *Catholic Union*, 22 June 1876: 4.
- 61 "Irish Home Rule," *Catholic Union*, 23 October 1878: 4. For a later critical editorial, see "Dr. Butt's Leadership," *Catholic Union*, 24 December 1878: 4.
- 62 "Irish Home Rule," *Catholic Union*, 23 October 1878: 4.
- 63 For a sample list, see "Local Agents," *Catholic Union*, 4 January 1877: 8.
- 64 *Buffalo City Directory for the Year 1877* (Buffalo, New York: Courier Co., 1877), 215.
- 65 All of the subscribers to the *Catholic Union* listed in issues between the beginning of January and the end of June were entered into a database. A total of 925 entries was recorded, and when repeat subscribers were omitted, the revised total was 896. *Rowell's American Newspaper Directory* (1879), 220, indicates a circulation of not more than three thousand. The southern "Irish" Buffalo wards 1, 2, and 3 are mapped in Jenkins, *Between Raid and Rebellion*, 83. Ward thirteen is a suburban extension of ward 1 and although largely rural in 1879, contained a social mix comparable to the other southern wards.
- 66 Other prominent subscriber surnames were Brennan, Carroll, Collins, Kelly, Mahoney, Maloney, O'Brien, O'Connor and Sheehan.
- 67 "Fenianism in Batavia," *Fenian Volunteer*, 15 February 1868.
- 68 See, for example, the columns headed "Remittances" in *Catholic Union*, 29 January; 12 February; and 26 March 1879.

- 69 Rowell's *American Newspaper Directory* (1879), 220.
- 70 Rowell's *American Newspaper Directory* (1879), 238, 146.
- 71 See Jenkins, *Between Raid and Rebellion*, 204-7.
- 72 "Parnell!," *Catholic Union*, 29 January 1880: 4.
- 73 See Michael Funchion, "Clan Na Gael," in *Irish-American Voluntary Organizations*, ed. Funchion (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1983), 74-93. The Clan had largely superseded the Fenian Brotherhood by the early 1870s and organized the *Catalpa* rescue; see Sim, *A Union Forever*, 133, 138.
- 74 "Parnell!," *Catholic Union*, 29 January 1880: 4.
- 75 For the Nun of Kenmare's views, see "The Nun of Kenmare on 'The Irish Question'," *Catholic Union*, 3 and 10 March 1881: 5.
- 76 "Irish Land League," *Catholic Union*, 20 January 1881: 5.
- 77 "No Coercion!," *Catholic Union*, 24 February 1881: 4.
- 78 George P. Rowell's *American Newspaper Directory* (New York: George P. Rowell and Co., 1885), 352, 603, 376, 227.
- 79 Fanning, "Robert Emmet," 59.
- 80 "Last Words of Robert Emmett," *Fenian Volunteer*, 4 January 1868: 1.
- 81 *Irish World*, 11 November 1876.
- 82 "O'Connell's Day," *Catholic Union*, 5 August 1875: 5.
- 83 "O'Connell's Day," *Catholic Union*, 5 August 1875: 5.
- 84 "O'Connell's Day," *Catholic Union*, 5 August 1875: 5.
- 85 "O'Connell and George Francis Train!," *Catholic Union*, 12 August 1875: 4.
- 86 "The Critique," *Catholic Union*, 19 July 1877: 4.
- 87 "The Critique," *Catholic Union*, 19 July 1877: 4.
- 88 For a discussion of the element of "habit-memory" within the wider concept of social/collective memory, see Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 25-36.
- 89 "Robert Emmet," *Catholic Union*, 7 March 1878: 5.
- 90 "Robert Emmet," *Catholic Union*, 7 March 1878: 5. Murphy was also the recording secretary for the aforementioned Catholic Union, Circle of Buffalo, in 1878, with McManus acting as its corresponding secretary.
- 91 Fanning, "Robert Emmet," 65.
- 92 "Dramatic Presentation," *Catholic Union*, 20 November 1878: 5; Patrick M. Geoghegan, *Robert Emmet: A Life* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 269. See also James Pilgrim, *Robert Emmet: The Martyr of Irish Liberty, A Historical Drama in Three Acts*, rev. by Charles Townsend (New York: Dick and Fitzgerald, 1903), available at [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org) (accessed 4 June 2014). Sarah Curran was the youngest daughter of John Philpot Curran (mentioned in the main text) and was the great love, though never the wife, of Robert Emmet.
- 93 "The Day in Buffalo," *Irish World*, 22 March 1879.
- 94 "Robert Emmet," *Irish World*, 8 February, 1879: 4. Original emphasis.
- 95 "Robert Emmet," *Irish World*, 8 February, 1879: 4. For more on the American context of O'Connell's repeal campaign, see Sim, *A Union Forever*, 11-38.
- 96 "Robert Emmet," *Irish World*, 8 February, 1879: 4.
- 97 Elliott, *Robert Emmet*, 178; Sim, *A Union Forever*, 74-84.
- 98 See "Robert Emmet," *Catholic Union*, 4 March, 1880: 5, where the report declares: "If ever there was a time when the memories of Emmet should be kept green it is now."
- 99 "The Land League," *Catholic Union and Times*, 8 March 1883: 5.

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- 100 Keyes, *Funding the Nation*, 163.
- 101 "Irish National League," *Catholic Union and Times*, 18 February: 5, and "An Enthusiastic Meeting," *Catholic Union and Times*, 4 March 1886: 5.
- 102 "Emmet's Day," *Catholic Union and Times*, 4 March 1886: 4.
- 103 "Emmet's Day!," *Catholic Union and Times*, March 11 1886: 5.
- 104 "Emmet's Day!," *Catholic Union and Times*, March 11 1886: 5.
- 105 "Emmet's Day," *Catholic Union and Times*, 10 March 1887: 4; "The Critique," *Catholic Union*, 19 July 1877: 4.
- 106 "Emmet's Day," *Catholic Union and Times*, 8 March 1888: 5.
- 107 "Emmet's Day," *Catholic Union and Times*, 8 March 1888: 5.
- 108 "Emmet's Day," *Catholic Union and Times*, 8 March 1888: 5.
- 109 "Emmet's Day," *Catholic Union and Times*, 8 March 1888: 5.
- 110 Jenkins, *Between Raid and Rebellion*, 312.
- 111 Jenkins, *Between Raid and Rebellion*, 352.



# Creating Citizens from Colonial Subjects: Reforming Local Government in Early Twentieth Century Ireland

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**ABSTRACT:** Despite the incorporation of Ireland as a constituent component of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland through the 1801 Act of Union, for much of the early part of the nineteenth century, British policy towards Ireland retained its colonial overtones. However, from the late 1860s a subtle shift began to occur as successive British governments attempted to pacify Irish claims for independence and transform the Irish population into active, peaceful, participating British citizens. This paper examines the role played by the Local Government (Ireland) Act of 1898 in affecting this transformation. The reform of local government enshrined in the act not only offered the Irish population a measure of democratic, representative, local self-government in the form of county, urban district, and rural district councils, but also brought Irish local government onto a par with that of the rest of the United Kingdom. Through the use of local and national archival sources, this paper seeks to illuminate a crucial period in Anglo-Irish colonial relations, when for a number of years, the Irish population at a local level, at least, were treated as equal imperial citizens who engaged with the state and actively operated as its locally based agents.

“Increasingly in the nineteenth century the tentacles of the British Empire were stretching deep into the remote corners of the Irish countryside, bearing with them schools, barracks, dispensaries, post offices, and all the other paraphernalia of the ... state.”<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

The Act of Union of 1801 moved Ireland from the colonial periphery to the metropolitan core, incorporating the island as a constituent part of the imperial power of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. With elected representatives taking their seats in the imperial parliament in Westminster, it could be imagined that Ireland would have embarked immediately on a period of decolonization and that Ireland’s postcolonial era would have begun. Indeed such arguments have been put forward to explain the lack of colonial discourse discernible in the academic literature relating to Ireland in the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> However, this was a merger born of coercion not desire. In the wake of French collusion with the United Irishmen in the 1798 rebellion, it was clear that, from the British point of view, Ireland required more, not less, supervision. This supervision could best be achieved if Ireland was wholly subsumed into the United Kingdom, thereby allowing the metropolitan center increased opportunities for oversight and control. During the first half of the nineteenth century, as suggested in the opening quotation, the state gradually increased its control over Ireland through the introduction of a range of legislative innovations that deepened the uneven relationship between state and citizens,

reflecting the typical patterns of encounters between the colonizer and the colonized.<sup>3</sup> As Andrews stated, Ireland began “to look more colonial than when it had really been a colony.”<sup>4</sup> Further, in spite of some concessions towards the majority, but oppressed, Roman Catholic population after the granting of Catholic Emancipation, the character of state relief during the Great Irish Famine underlined the colonial nature of relations between the two territories.<sup>5</sup>

After the famine, however, it is possible to detect a shift in relations between the state and the landed ascendancy class. Up to this point the landed class, descendants of the initial colonizers, were viewed as the representatives of the colonizing state in Ireland. By the 1850s, the inefficiency, poor management and inability to pay for famine relief exhibited by a portion of the landlord community, combined with wholesale land clearances, evictions and the ruthless implementation of the Gregory Clause by a further portion, reduced the British government’s sympathy for the Irish landlord class. The famine itself and the illumination of these shortcomings increased the state’s understanding of the role played by the Irish landholding system in fomenting civil unrest in Ireland, while the incompetence they displayed in local administration convinced the British government to further increase centralized state control. As the state began to tackle these issues, a decoupling took place between the state and the landed class in Ireland. Through the reform of landholding, the transfer of local administration from the landlord-dominated grand juries to the partially elected boards of guardians and the overall increase in central state supervision, the state began to stand apart from its colonial partners.<sup>6</sup> From the 1870s, a newfound interest in the arts, rationalities and techniques of government replaced the mediation of landed interest and the state began to focus on resolving “the Irish question” by pacifying Ireland. In doing so, the gradual process of incorporating colonial subjects as active participating citizens of the empire was begun.

This paper examines the culmination of these efforts in the pioneering and yet little-studied legislation enacted as the Local Government (Ireland) Act of 1898. The act introduced the first form of democratic, representative self-government for the citizens of Ireland, while simultaneously giving the Irish population equal parity with their imperial counterparts in England, Scotland and Wales. The sources utilized in this discussion range from parliamentary debates and legislation at a macro-level to local newspaper accounts at a micro-level. This combination of macro- and micro- level sources allows for an illumination of the complexities inherent in the everyday operation of local government and the alterations that occur when legislative reforms are actualized at a local level. More importantly, from the point of view of this special issue, this investigation of an overlooked aspect of the state’s Irish policy offers an additional lens through which to nuance our understanding of the relationship between the two territories. The discussion which follows will outline the ambiguous position of Ireland in the late nineteenth century before examining the rationale behind the reform of local government and providing an overview of the provisions enacted by the legislation. This investigation will allow for an examination of the extent to which the introduction of the act can be considered a watershed marking the true transition in the treatment of the Irish population from colonial subjects to citizens of the imperial state.

### **An ambiguous position – imperial core or colony**

The Local Government (Ireland) Act of 1898 was part of the second of two markedly different approaches taken by successive Liberal and Conservative governments in addressing “the Irish question” and which defined the state’s Irish policy from the late 1860s into the early twentieth century. Both parties sought to complete the incorporation of the Irish population into the state, a process that had begun with the Act of Union, through a systematic engagement with Irish grievances and demands that were seen as barriers to peaceful co-existence between the

two territories. Conversely, coincident with this was the increasing strength of the nationalist movement in Ireland which campaigned for independence, much to the consternation of the government and the unionist population across Ireland. This contest for supremacy between the juxtaposing ideals of nationalism and imperialism formed the basis of relations between Ireland and Great Britain up to the creation of the Free State in 1922, threatening and eventually undermining the imperial center. Further, the uniquely ambiguous position of Ireland as neither entirely subsumed within the core nor sufficiently distanced to be considered a colony ensured that "Irish nationalism posed a direct challenge to the integrity of two spatial units to which British loyalties were addressed: the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the British Empire of Great Britain and its colonies."<sup>7</sup>

In discussing the Home Rule movement and the eventual partition of Ireland, Anderson and O'Dowd examined the conflict arising from the competing ideals of nationalism and imperialism in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.<sup>8</sup> Their work situated the Irish question in its wider, international context as part of the growth of nation-states and the demise of imperialism. Crucially, however, they highlighted the interdependent nature of these two differing political viewpoints, drawing attention to the facts that imperial cores were themselves nation-states who often practiced "a form of schizophrenia, 'nationalist' at home, 'imperialist' abroad" and that the interactions between imperialism and nationalism have shaped the modern states and nations which emerged.<sup>9</sup> This interaction and negotiation between imperial and national ideals is clearly identifiable in the Irish context from the 1870s onwards. The introduction to Westminster of a united group of Irish-nationalist MPs in the form of the Irish Parliamentary Party not only brought nationalist demands directly to the imperial center but also, through the political tactics they implemented, forced the imperial center to engage to some extent with these demands, if only to allow the ordinary business of government to continue.<sup>10</sup>

For the imperial core, these tactics represented a direct threat to the stability and smooth running of the empire and necessitated the state's engagement with new techniques to manage the Irish situation and to further the aim of the full assimilation of the Irish population as imperial citizens. For Foucault, this focus on population and the security of the state is typical of the evolution of the arts of government he outlined throughout his lecture series entitled *Security, Territory and Population* delivered at the Collège de France in 1978.<sup>11</sup> Initially envisioned as a furtherance of the discussion of biopower introduced in the earlier series *Society Must be Defended*, this series experienced a shift in focus in the fourth lecture when Foucault's attention turned to the issue of governmentality. Indeed, by the end of this lecture Foucault wished to change the name of the series to "a history of 'governmentality'."<sup>12</sup> Throughout the course, Foucault examined the changes that had occurred in the style and arts of governing populations: from sovereignty, in the sixteenth century, as illustrated by Machiavelli's *The Prince*, through political economy (which he also refers to as discipline), depicted by Rousseau's *Encyclopedia* article, to the development in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries of governmentality. He dismissed the idea of a distinct break between one art of government and another, suggesting instead the existence of a triangle encompassing sovereignty, discipline and government, "which has population as its main target and apparatuses of security as its essential mechanism."<sup>13</sup> It was this shift in focus from the individual to the population which Foucault viewed as the key innovation, necessitating the formulation of new governmental techniques. In order to control a body of people, the state required knowledge about that body, thereby introducing a new impetus to the collection of "statistics" – meaning the science of the state. With the development of statistical techniques, the population became a quantifiable object, revealing that populations have their own patterns of disease, scarcity, wealth, and poverty, which must be understood before any new methods can be "employed as the state both represents and intervenes in the domains it seeks to govern."<sup>14</sup>

These ideas have proven hugely influential within geography, as evidenced by the substantial corpus of texts which utilize and invoke Foucault as a theoretical basis, particularly

in studies investigating the complex interrelationships between space, place and territory and power, knowledge and government.<sup>15</sup> Indeed Foucault recognized the importance of geography within his work when he stated, "Geography must indeed necessarily lie at the heart of my concerns."<sup>16</sup> Given this admission, a major gap in Foucault's work—the lack of meaningful analysis of colonialism and colonial power relations—is all the more surprising. In this context, Foucault's Eurocentrism and lack of engagement with the colonial context has led to much criticism of his work. Nevertheless, as Stoler has pointed out, this has in no way prevented the saturation of the field of colonial studies with research that draws on and develops Foucault's writings as an analytical framework.<sup>17</sup> Legg's examination of the "absent presence of colonialism in Foucault" offers a nuanced critique of Foucault's engagement with colonial and postcolonial contexts, drawing out the passing references which Foucault made to these issues for more detailed study and examination.<sup>18</sup> However, as he outlines, it is the work of others in applying Foucault to different colonial contexts that has been most fruitful. Ireland has only recently become the object of such foucauldian colonial studies through the work of Morrissey and Nally and it is to these works that this study seeks to add.<sup>19</sup>

The collection of statistics became a major feature of state policy in Ireland in the nineteenth century as the state refocused its attention from the territory of Ireland to its population. This effort has bequeathed "a comprehensive array of government-sponsored topographic maps, inventories of property valuations, statistical databases of population and demography, inventories of placenames and administrative units, surveys of bogs and mineral resources, and scores of parliamentary reports on a diverse range of social, economic and development issues."<sup>20</sup> The knowledge thus gathered was then fed into legislative innovations designed to govern, in Foucault's terms, the "conduct of conduct" of the Irish population, which also included additional mechanisms for knowledge gathering and surveillance.<sup>21</sup> As Legg has outlined in the case of India, this form of government allows the state to attempt "to shape, guide or affect personal action without the use of physical force."<sup>22</sup> Armed with sufficient knowledge about a population, Foucault argued that the population then becomes an object in the hands of the government, "aware of what it wants and unaware of what is being done to it."<sup>23</sup> Indeed, this might well be the case in a country where the legitimacy of the state is uncontested, however, in late nineteenth-century Ireland, the legitimacy of the state was very much contested. As such, every new legislative development was subjected to detailed examination and investigation, if not by everyone then certainly by their elected representatives in Westminster. In addition, the existence of a physical-force nationalist tradition ensured that outright violence was an ever-present threat challenging state authority. In this way, Foucault's comment that "there is no power without potential refusal or revolt" holds particular resonance in the context of nineteenth-century Ireland.<sup>24</sup>

This active and potentially violent opposition to state aims and techniques, alongside the presence of Irish elected representatives in Westminster, challenges the imposition of a thin colonial narrative over Ireland in the nineteenth century. In the early years under the Union, instances of oppression and inequality were rife and it is fair to state that the Irish MPs were members of the colonial ruling class and entirely unrepresentative of the wider population. Ruane defines colonialism as:

[T]he intrusion into and conquest of an inhabited territory by the representatives (formal or informal) of an external power; the displacement of the native inhabitants (elites and/or commoners) from resources and positions of power; the subsequent exercise of economic, political, and cultural control over the territory and native population by the intruders and their descendants, in their own interests and in the name and interests of the external power.<sup>25</sup>



By these parameters, it would be fair to conclude that Ireland in the early nineteenth century was indeed more a colony than a properly integrated part of the core. Economic relations also support this assertion as outlined by Slater and McDonough, who use Marx's analysis of the Irish question to argue that there was an enforced feudalization of Irish agriculture and a maintenance of Ireland's colonial status through economic dependency.<sup>26</sup> However, their discussion ends in 1867 before the radical changes in land ownership and tenant rights of the later part of the century. In addition, the aforementioned reforms in religious equality, the increase in the franchise and the introduction of the secret ballot act ensured that by the 1870s Irish representatives in Westminster were more properly representatives of the native population, if not necessarily natives themselves. Any discussion of the colonial status of Ireland under the Union must consider this evolution of relations between the territories and should consider this later part when Liberal and Conservative governments alike actively sought to pacify and assimilate the Irish population with concessions to Irish autonomy.

This stage in colonial relations began in December 1868, when newly confirmed Prime Minister William Gladstone stated, "my mission is to pacify Ireland," a phrase which became synonymous with his leadership of the Liberal government in Westminster.<sup>27</sup> This was not solely a statement of conciliatory intent, as it came in the immediate aftermath of the abortive Fenian Rising of 1867, which saw Fenian attacks on English soil for the first time. Gladstone initiated his policy with the introduction of religious equality through the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland in 1869 and an attempt to tackle the land question through the Land Act of 1870. However, the land question would not be so easily solved. The agricultural crisis of the late 1870s led to the onset of the Land War in Ireland and the emergence of a united nationalist movement melding together for the first time all shades of Irish nationalism.<sup>28</sup> This proved a powerful combination as the strength of the mass movement forced the state to address the grievances expressed. The state was naturally unwilling to bow to the threat of violence and engaged in a two-fold process of coercion and conciliation. This allowed the state to maintain its integrity, while also engaging with and meeting some of the most significant demands of the population, including more far-reaching land reforms. While the negotiation and eventual compromise with nationalist demands can be seen as evidence of the colony being brought ever further into the core, the coercion legislation equally stands as evidence of the continued use of oppressive colonial powers.

Within Ireland, the Land War simply added momentum to the campaign to distance Ireland from the imperial core through the establishment of a Home Rule parliament in Dublin. The movement received an additional boost when Gladstone and the Liberals entered into coalition with the Irish Parliamentary Party in 1886, with Irish Parliamentary Party support conditional on the introduction of a Home Rule bill. This bill was ultimately and unsurprisingly unsuccessful, but the speed with which it had almost become a reality shocked the unionist population in Ireland, who sought out the support of the Conservative Party and mobilized their own counter-campaign. The Liberals' pragmatic approach to Home Rule was not shared by the Conservatives, who viewed any attempt to reduce the strength of the Union as a direct attack on the empire. For their part, from the 1880s onwards the Conservative Party engaged in a policy designed to conciliate nationalists to their position within the imperial center by addressing each particular grievance and improving living conditions in Ireland more generally. This policy, known as constructive unionism or "killing home rule by kindness," saw the introduction of a further range of Ireland-specific legislation including additional land reform measures, funding for the provision of light railways and the establishment of the Congested Districts Board in 1891.<sup>29</sup> These measures, combined with the split of the Home Rule movement (as a result of the Catholic hierarchy's rejection of party-leader Parnell once his extra-marital affair became public), the failure of a second Home Rule bill and Gladstone's retirement, ensured that there was little

in the way of a Home Rule threat left to kill when the Conservative Party returned to power in 1895. It would appear that the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland was solid and secure as it approached the twentieth century, but nevertheless the constructive unionism policy continued unabated with further measures to appease, incorporate and create citizens of the Irish population. These further measures included the reform of local government.

### **Reforming local government**

The policy of constructive unionism was initially overseen by Chief Secretary Arthur Balfour and continued by his brother Gerald. Gerald for his part was responsible for the Land Act of 1896, the Local Government (Ireland) Act of 1898 and an act establishing the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction in 1899.<sup>30</sup> At first glance, this continuity of policy appears merely as a seamless transition of power and politics from one political figure to another. However, a more detailed examination poses several questions concerning the real reasons for the hurried introduction of a far-reaching measure of local government reform in 1898.

The lack of a united parliamentary movement campaigning for improvements in Irish conditions ensured that by the late 1890s, Ireland began to slide off the main political agenda. MPs begged Gerald Balfour to return to the business of running the empire – “Give us a little of England and never mind Ireland.”<sup>31</sup> Even if there had been a strong Irish national movement, local government reform would have been low on its list of priorities. There had been some calls for the reform of Irish local government in the early 1880s before “the revolt of the tenantry,” as a result of the Land War, saw the Catholic middle classes grasping political opportunities on the boards of guardians.<sup>32</sup> With the reform of local government in England, Scotland and Wales in 1888, it was expected that a measure of Irish local government would follow, but the measure proposed by Arthur Balfour in 1892 was considered “so weighted with safeguards” that nationalists attacked it as insulting, humiliating and unworkable.<sup>33</sup> From then on, local government seemed to slip from the radar of Irish reformists and there was certainly no groundswell of public opinion in Ireland clamoring for reform or equal status in this regard in 1898.

Rather it was the imminent failure of Gerald Balfour’s own pet project, the creation of an agricultural board for Ireland, which forced the government to tackle local government reform. The creation of an agricultural board seemed like a straightforward piece of constructive unionism that would lead to the rejuvenation of the Irish economy, but it was introduced just as evidence of financial inequalities between Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom were brought to light. Ireland had been overtaxed since the Act of Union to the sum of around £2.5 million per annum.<sup>34</sup> This revelation united all shades of political opinion across Ireland against the government, particularly when combined with the fact that the Irish representatives were already reeling from the government’s earlier refusal to extend the agricultural rating grant to Ireland.<sup>35</sup> If, as O’Hearn argued, the suppression of economic activity is one of the key markers of colonialism in nineteenth-century Ireland, then the above fact highlights that this was still the case entering the twentieth century.<sup>36</sup> For the Irish population and their representatives, it further served to strengthen arguments about the dependent and subsidiary position of Ireland, reinforcing the fact that despite political rhetoric they were indeed unequal members of the union. If the government wished to introduce any further measures, they would first have to deal with these financial grievances. This necessitated the reform of local government, and it was announced that a measure would be introduced during the 1898 parliamentary session.<sup>37</sup>

The introduction of the Local Government (Ireland) Bill, therefore, not only provided a means for Balfour to avoid a political stalemate; it also paved the way for the introduction of the legislation that caused the stalemate with the creation of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction in 1899, albeit after a short delay. Further, through the introduction

of democratic, local self-government for Ireland, the Conservatives did intend to reduce the clamor among the Irish population for Home Rule, aiming to redress imbalances in the legislation between Ireland and the rest of Britain allowing for the further pacification of a country that had up to now responded well to the policy of constructive unionism. Balfour and his cabinet, then, were not only attempting the "conduct of conduct" of the Irish population, but also the conduct of the British and Irish MPs who were preventing them attaining their legislative goals.<sup>38</sup> In this way the actual rationale behind the introduction of local government reform carries little in the way of colonial overtones. Rather, as Horace Plunkett remarked, it was "'a masterstroke of state-craft' [...], a purely English necessity' for an English crisis."<sup>39</sup>

In spite of the rationales of governmentality inherent in the timing of the introduction of this legislation there is little doubt that this reform was necessary if the Irish population were to be finally subsumed as equal citizens of the United Kingdom. In the early nineteenth century, Irish local government was composed of two main strands: grand juries which operated at a county level; and municipal authorities which managed the day-to-day running of urban areas. Both these strands were dominated by the Protestant, landed ascendancy and were viewed as corrupt, inefficient, outdated and sectarian, not just by the population they were supposed to serve, but also by the state. The grand jury was selected by the high sheriff from the largest landowners in each county, resulting in public representatives who had varying degrees of interest in local administration, while the municipal corporations "flagrantly neglect[ed] town services," concentrating instead "on the important political function of returning members of the right persuasion to parliament" and furthering unionist political dominance.<sup>40</sup> The need for reform was tackled in a piecemeal fashion in the mid-nineteenth century most notably through the Municipal Corporation (Ireland) Act of 1840, which simply dissolved fifty-eight of the sixty-eight town corporations that were in existence, while the introduction of the Poor Relief (Ireland) Act of 1838 by-passed the extant local authorities, creating an entirely new local authority system.<sup>41</sup>

The Irish Poor Law system was based on the British version and as such introduced a new model for local authority administration with the oversight of a central state authority in the form of the Poor Law Commission. This central state supervision was considered necessary to ensure uniform standards and the efficient operation of the new boards of guardians, more especially because the act introduced an elected element to these boards.<sup>42</sup> This central supervision also acted as a form of surveillance as the returns from local bodies to the commission increased the state's understanding of local patterns and idiosyncrasies. In addition, the nature of the territorial coverage of the poor-law unions introduced by the act extended state power and knowledge-gathering networks to even the furthest periphery of the island.<sup>43</sup> As the only form of local authority with central state supervision, the boards of guardians accrued an increasing range of functions throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century while the "former recipients of fresh functions, the grand juries and the magistracy, made no further advances after 1837 [...] within a generation a mass of legislation [...] had fallen to some degree or other, to the guardians to administer."<sup>44</sup>

In 1872, in recognition of their increasing functions, the Irish Poor Law Commission was reconstituted as the Local Government Board. However, the ad hoc addition of functions to the boards of guardians was unsustainable and generally unworkable. Boards that had been set up with only the administration of the poor law in mind had become responsible for a wide range of diverse functions, which they had neither the funds nor the resources to properly implement. As a result, the boards were selective about the implementation of their new functions, and many measures of social reform and government surveillance were neglected. Thus in addition to the need to place Irish local democracy on an equal footing with the rest of United Kingdom, by 1898 it was clear that reform was vital to ensure the proper operation of legislative innovations and also

to remove the tangled, overlapping and dysfunctional nature of the Irish local authority system. It was against this backdrop, in 1898, that the reform of Irish local government was undertaken, rationalizing the existing system of local government, to create a highly centralized yet totally democratic form of local government that finally separated the state and Irish landed interests in local administration.

### **The Local Government (Ireland) Act of 1898**

There is little in the above rationale that is suggestive of a colonial relationship. Measures were being implemented to ensure equality for all the citizens of the United Kingdom and to improve the operation of local government in one territory. If the intended outcome was to further pacify the Irish population and remove the threat of Home Rule, then this is certainly suggestive of a government formulating policies for its population and improving the security of the state rather than reinforcing any dependent or inferior status between the imperial center and the periphery. This fact is further reinforced from a reading of the local government act and the measures it introduced.

"An Act for amending the Law relating to Local Government in Ireland, and for the other purposes connected therewith" was signed into law on 12 August 1898.<sup>45</sup> The new legislation was based largely on measures of local government reform enacted for England, Scotland and Wales in 1888 and 1894, but it did contain a number of provisions that were unique to Ireland.<sup>46</sup> The act provided for the creation of a two-tier system of local government in Ireland, setting up county councils and both urban and rural district councils. As the name suggests, county councils would operate at a county level, replacing the grand juries as administrators of all fiscal and local administration.<sup>47</sup> The rural and urban district councils were established to operate at a sub-county level, providing local functions at a much more local level. Towns with a population of over fifteen hundred, which had earlier been designated as urban sanitary authorities, would become urban district councils, while smaller towns and those which had not been granted sanitary status would retain their town commissioners. Towns which had never had town commissioners would simply come under the control of the local rural district council. The rural district councils' areas of operation were generally coterminous with the local poor law union, except where the union spanned a county boundary.<sup>48</sup> These district councils assumed all the non-curative healthcare functions from the boards of guardians, separating once more local administration and healthcare into two distinct areas of administration. This two-tiered system differed slightly from the composition of the local authority network in England and Wales, where an additional tier of parish councils existed. Gerald Balfour explained this discrepancy as arising not from a desire to create inequalities, but from the advantage of building local government reform within "the existing law and practice in that country," suggesting that as parish administration would be new to Ireland, this extra tier would "add a superfluous difficulty to our scheme."<sup>49</sup>

In terms of the functions that these new councils would administer, the county councils were made responsible for the financial administration of local government, in particular the levying of rates to pay for county services. Under the new act the old county cess and poor rate were amalgamated into the county rate, from which the majority of local authority spending would be financed. The county councils also assumed responsibility for county-wide functions, including the administration of county infirmaries and district asylums and the development and maintenance of all main roads. As the fiscally responsible tier, the county councils also had responsibility for the supervision and approval of work undertaken by the district councils. The district councils, for their part, would be responsible for the proper administration of a wide range of local functions. The most important of these were the creation and maintenance of district infrastructure; the provision of social housing in the form of laborers' cottages and artisans'



dwelling; and the administration of public health and sanitation legislation—covering everything from nuisance removal, the inspection of dwellings, lodging houses, dairies and factories to the prevention of the spread of infectious diseases and the provision and maintenance of sewerage and water supply schemes. In addition, they were given powers relating to the provision of public lighting, fairs and markets, the administration of compulsory school attendance regulations and the most controversial measure to be retained by the Local Government (Ireland) Act, the defence of malicious injuries.

The defence of malicious injuries had been introduced to Ireland under the Malicious Damage Act of 1861.<sup>50</sup> The Act stated that if it could be proved that destruction or damage to an individual's property was maliciously caused, then that individual could take a case for compensation against the area's local authority. If the claim was successful, the costs awarded were levied off the county cess of the area where the injury occurred. When this Act was introduced, Ireland was in a state of widespread political unrest; attacks against landlords, the Royal Irish Constabulary and even against lesser English or Protestant landowners were rife. The rationale behind the Act was that by making local people responsible, they would be less likely to engage in, or support those involved in, such activity. Given the relatively settled state of Ireland in 1898, there were strenuous objections to the continuation of this legislation. The Irish MPs were vocal in their opposition, with John Dillon claiming that the whole code was "a most iniquitous law," which was used by the state "in a most unfair and unjust spirit [...] as an instrument of direct vengeance and oppression" and as "a code of coercion against the people of Ireland."<sup>51</sup> However, in spite of such serious misgivings on the part of many Irish MPs, the government refused to relent, and the provisions were transferred to the new local authorities.<sup>52</sup> This represented one of the few aspects of the legislation in which significant colonial overtones could be identified. This was a uniquely Irish provision for an Irish situation of unrest, an attempt to control the Irish population in a way that differed substantially from the measures included for the other constituent territories of the United Kingdom.

In spite of this, the most noteworthy feature of the act was not the creation of the new authorities nor the functions that they would eventually administer, but rather the fact that these new local authorities would introduce the first form of truly democratic local government to Ireland. The act extended the principle of universal suffrage (as far as it was enshrined in the parliamentary franchise) to Ireland, giving all occupiers, lodgers and qualified women a vote, while also abolishing all property qualifications which had hitherto prevented members of the lower classes of the population standing for election.<sup>53</sup> The sole requirement to stand for election to the newly created councils was that candidates had to be local government electors in the electoral division in which they stood. This move paved the way for female representation on the district councils, although they were prevented from standing for county and borough councils positions until 1911.<sup>54</sup> This opened the field of local government to all classes in Ireland for the first time, presenting local populations with the opportunity of governing their own affairs and removing the final vestiges of landlord power from local administration.

Of course, the potential of this act was not greeted with enthusiasm by the landlords, who constituted the largest ratepayers and therefore the people who bore the heaviest burden of financing local services. Concerns that had been voiced in 1892 resurfaced, addressing the issue of the £4-valuation threshold for the payment of rates. The wealthy claimed that this provision made it possible for local representatives who paid none of the rates to vote for expensive local public works and building schemes. These concerns were shared by a majority of British and Irish MPs and the chief secretary, who therefore proposed altering the rating structure as part of the act. The new act removed the £4-valuation limit, reconstituting all occupiers as ratepayers. In this way, both electors and elected representatives would be impacted by any unnecessary rising

of the rates, while landlords would at least share the burden with their fellow citizens. Indeed, it was hoped that this measure would encourage a desire to introduce frugality and economy into local administration as ratepayers would be unlikely to re-elect representatives who had placed too heavy a rate burden on the local population.

It was, however, also recognized that removing the rate burden off the landlords threatened the financing of local services, as in many areas the level of local poverty would prevent many from meeting their rate demand, creating a deficit in local authority budgets. As a result, the agricultural grant (which could finally be extended to Ireland with the reform of local government) was to be used to compensate the new local authorities for the loss of landlord contributions.<sup>55</sup> The amount to be granted was calculated based on half the average amount of the poor rate and county cess levied over the three years preceding 1897, estimated to total approximately £730,000 annually.<sup>56</sup> This piece of statecraft won over the landlords to the new measures, while simultaneously ensuring the viability of the new bodies as functional entities. In this way, the legislation did make special allowances for the descendants of the colonial settlers in Ireland; however, this provision did little to privilege them or allow them further dominance.

There were however, circumscriptions to this newfound local self-government, which could be interpreted as the remaining vestiges of a colonial legacy. These took the form of conservative safeguards such as the compulsory inclusion of three former local authority members for the first three years of the councils' existence and, more importantly, the reconstitution of the Local Government Board as the superintending and controlling authority over the county, urban district and rural district councils. The short-term inclusion of former local authority members was designed to alleviate conservative and landed interests' fears centering on the wholesale handover of local government to new, inexperienced, potentially uneducated and nationalist local representatives. Even nationalist MPs agreed that as the Irish population had been so entirely excluded from local administration, the inclusion of experienced representatives would be beneficial, and the measure met with little opposition. The supervisory role of the Local Government Board however, did raise a number of issues. Concerns about the family and class background of the board's members were raised with serious reservations expressed as to the suitability of the Local Government Board to act as a superintending authority over the new democratic, nationalist councils and the potential for gerrymandering of the political balance to allow for the representation of the minority landlord class.<sup>57</sup> However, in debates on the lunacy provisions within the bill, the Irish MPs actively campaigned to have the Local Government Board and not the Lord Lieutenant made responsible for the administration of the lunatic asylums. They claimed that it was better to have a board that was answerable to the House of Commons and therefore subject to investigation and examination by the elected members, than a member of the House of Lords.<sup>58</sup> This suggests that despite serious reservations about the biased nature of the Local Government Board, it was nonetheless viewed as the lesser of two evils.

The position of the Local Government Board was improved in the eyes of Irish MPs with the inclusion of the highly respected nationalist member of the Congested Districts Board, W. L. Micks, as an additional commissioner in May 1898.<sup>59</sup> This decision was not supported by some of the more prominent members of parliament. Lord Cadogan, then Lord Lieutenant, wrote to Balfour confirming Micks' appointment but conveying his disappointment at Balfour's decision stating:

I have signed the appointment as you wish. I am sorry about Micks, as he is I believe [?] a Home Ruler and a Radical and I do not think it is a good policy offending the loyalists in Ireland. However the thing is done and the less we say about it the better.<sup>60</sup>

The inclusion of Micks successfully negated arguments from the Irish MPs in relation to the biased composition of the Local Government Board, while it simultaneously appeased public opinion through the inclusion of a well-known and respected official.<sup>61</sup> There could be no further complaints that the act introduced limits to the freedom of nationalist, democratic local authorities in the form of a solely protestant, unionist supervisory board.

In colonial terms, Crossman has argued that the Local Government Board exercised a much greater level of supervision over Irish local government than its British counterpart, citing the close involvement of local government inspectors in day-to-day administration and the landed background of the board members.<sup>62</sup> The former assertion is not borne out in accounts provided by Ogborn and Bellamy, which show that similar levels of surveillance and supervision operated across Great Britain. Ogborn has examined the close supervision exercised by the British Local Government Board in relation to its production of knowledge about diverse territories, allowing the state to develop strategic policies shaped by local specificities.<sup>63</sup> Bellamy, for her part, posits the existence of what she terms local possessive pluralism, highlighting that there are local factors at play which must be negotiated in any attempt to introduce state legislation. In doing so, she describes the importance of the dual role held by local authorities as simultaneously representatives of the central state and of the locality.<sup>64</sup> The difference in the Irish case, then, is not the level of contact, but the fact that the Irish Local Government Board viewed itself more as the direct guardian of the state's legislative plans and therefore engaged in less mediation of local possessive pluralist interests and more coercion of local authorities through financial and other sanctions. Given the contested nature of the state in Ireland and the inexperience of the new authorities created under the 1898 act, this more heavy-handed and less conciliatory approach may have had some justification.

Taken as a whole, the legislation enshrined in the Local Government (Ireland) Act represents a significant step towards equality for the Irish population. Democratic elections would allow for the creation of fully representative local authorities with wide-ranging powers to enact social and environmental reforms, while the traditional stranglehold of the landlord class on local administration was broken. Central-state supervision was maintained, but the composition of the board undertaking that supervision had at least been altered to include one representative of the majority population. Circumscriptions to the new powers did exist, there was some mediation of landlord interests, and certain provisions did still contain colonial overtones. However, this new act more represented techniques of governmentality employed by a state in an attempt to govern its population and ensure the security of the state, than a state undertaking the administration of a colonial other. This act stands as a key point in relations between Great Britain and Ireland, marking the first large-scale attempt to decolonize Ireland, not in the creation of a separate nation-state, but as a full member of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Nevertheless, the success of that aim was entirely dependent on the extent to which the Irish population grasped the opportunity for immersion within the state.

### **Imperial citizens or nationalist-separatists**

In order to gauge the level of engagement by the Irish population with that opportunity, it is necessary to examine the implementation of the legislation at a local level. This section offers a case study of the election process and the early meetings of one of the new local authorities created under the act—the rural district councils.<sup>65</sup> With the passing of the act, the stage was set for the first democratic local-authority elections to be held across Ireland. Each of the newly created rural districts was divided into a number of district electoral divisions for which two district councillors would be elected.<sup>66</sup> However, despite the momentous nature of this event, not every electoral division required an election to select their representatives. Elections were expensive and the population in many divisions sought to avoid this expense by holding informal local

selection meetings. Thus the Local Government Board's claim that on 6 April 1899 over four thousand elections were held "without the slightest hitch or disturbance of any kind" is somewhat exaggerated.<sup>67</sup> Of the 146 electoral divisions in Donegal, there were contests in eighty-four or fifty-eight percent, while the records from four rural districts in Meath show a slightly higher contest rate at sixty-seven percent.<sup>68</sup> If these figures are taken as an average for the country, they reduce the Local Government Board's total by almost a third, to around twenty-four hundred, an impressive feat for one day nonetheless.

The bypassing of the new legislation in this way did of course pose problems for the democratic nature of local government. In several areas, the meetings were run by one or other of the nationalist factions, and before potential candidates would even be put forward for consideration, they had to agree to the nationalist pledge which stated:

We hereby agree to attend, sit, act and vote at Council meetings with the Nationalist party on all occasions on which a party vote is taken, or otherwise resign our seat if called upon to do so by a majority of the electors. And further, that we will adopt and by every legitimate means promote the principles of the United Irish League.<sup>69</sup>

In other instances, however, the all-party nature of the meetings was celebrated as an indication of progressive and inclusive communities moving forward into the new century. For instance:

[T]he Catholics of Gartan Electoral Division, who had a large majority on the register, selected as one of their District Councillors Mr. Armour, a Protestant ... simply because in addition to his always being a Home Ruler, and a man of the people, Mr. Armour was the best and most capable man they could find in the district.<sup>70</sup>

The lack of state control over these meetings did also offer a platform for the one group excluded from local administration, the clergy. As leaders of the Catholic community, priests were often invited to chair selection meetings and, even when they were simply in attendance, they tended to be vocal in their opinions. In Oldcastle Rural District in Meath, a Protestant ex-grand juror was selected by the crowds but was "vehemently opposed" by a Father Smith, who swore that he would canvass the Catholics against him.<sup>71</sup> In the main, however, the clergy's main role was to make some statement about the opportunity presented by the reform of local government. Their speeches opening selection proceedings were replete with prophesies of the great opportunities that lay ahead for Ireland and outlined their vision as to how the new bodies could be utilized to pave the way towards Home Rule. One clergyman, in Lettermore electoral district, encouraged the local meeting to develop a strong desire to do "what is best and most expedient in turning this weapon, which the parliament of Britain had placed in their hands to the best advantage."<sup>72</sup> While in Killybegs, the local priest summed up the hopes and expectations for this new form of local government claiming that:

The county [...] was on its trial and was about to undertake a great responsibility. ... If they made the working of the new Act a failure they could hardly expect further concessions in the time to come; but on the contrary, if they proved themselves wise legislators in local matter[s] they might not only expect, but they could demand still more important measures.<sup>73</sup>

Orations such as these suggest that while the state might hope that local self-government would finally allow the incorporation of the Irish population into the state, the Irish population very



definitely had different ideas. They also show that despite being "under a disqualification," that "it would take more than a mere Act of Parliament to separate the priests and the people of Ireland."<sup>74</sup>

Of course these selection committees were successful only when the chosen candidate was the preferred candidate of the entire population. Any person or group of ratepayers who were unhappy with the decision could of course nominate an alternative representative and force a contest to be held. Unsurprisingly, the landed class was not necessarily in agreement with the decision of these selection meetings and, in many cases, former representatives put themselves forward, forcing an election contest. Several of these were responding to a plea by Balfour, issued in his introduction to the local government bill, for the continued participation of the landed classes in local government despite the rebuffs that they were initially likely to meet. He assured them that if they did not "stand aside in silence" and played "the more manly part" that they would ensure that the changes resulting from the Local Government (Ireland) Act would "carry with them a healing power rich in blessings for the future of Ireland."<sup>75</sup> This rather optimistic assertion was certainly a factor in encouraging the old local authority members to partake in the election process, while still others believed that their experience as longstanding local politicians would be beneficial to the new local authorities.

As already outlined, these attempts were not always in vain, even in rare cases where the landlord was not a supporter of nationalism. In addition to the Oldcastle candidate, a Mr Doherty of Whitecastle in County Donegal was selected simply because he was the largest ratepayer in the area and had, in the past, always proven himself the staunch friend of the local population.<sup>76</sup> In contrast, the more common reaction is aptly illustrated in the candidacy of a unionist landlord in the Letterkenny area of the county, who offered himself for election, without the backing of a local selection meeting.<sup>77</sup> His campaigning met with an abrupt end with the printing of a statement in the local newspaper claiming that "having no personal desire to serve on the county or district councils, and their being evidently no desire on the part of the electors that I should do so, I take this opportunity of intimating that I withdraw my offer to stand."<sup>78</sup>

The extent to which this reform of local government impacted on the average citizen can be ascertained both by the column-inches devoted to discussing the elections in the local newspapers, but also from the turnout of the local population at polling stations. An initial report for Donegal suggested that turnout had not been as high as expected, with a report that in one electoral division by three o'clock only one-tenth of those registered had voted, none of which were women.<sup>79</sup> This report was in direct contrast to numerous reports carried by a later paper, which also alluded to a slow morning in the polling stations, but stated that numbers increased steadily as the evening wore on. In Graffy electoral district, in Glenties Rural District, all but two of the electors voted, both of whom, it was reported, were sick. The high turnout there was achieved by the car owners of the district conveying the old and infirm to and from the polling stations, while in another electoral division, people returned home from as far afield as Scotland to vote. As regards the extent to which women made use of their new right to vote, the fact that more than one polling district reported a full turnout of voters suggests that the women voters were as energetic as their male counterparts in casting their votes. Several electoral divisions reported a high turnout of the women voters, while in one electoral division a "very old woman" insisted on being carried into the polling station in order to cast her vote.<sup>80</sup> Such determination on the part of male and female local government electors alike highlights the excitement that the new legislation sparked across the country. This was a form of local government that local people could really influence, and they were determined to play their part from the outset.

Similar opinions were also discernible in the first meetings held by the rural district councils on 15 April 1899 when "the councils generally dealt in a proper and business like manner

with questions coming before them," allowing for the successful inauguration of the new system of Irish local government.<sup>81</sup> The format of these first meetings was prescribed in advance through circulars issued by the Local Government Board and involved the signing of the councillors official declarations, the co-option of the ex-officio former representatives and the election of the council chairman, vice- and deputy vice-chairman. With these appointments complete, the council could embark on the work of representing the local population and ensuring the smooth operation of local services. It is important to note that for the majority of councils across Ireland, their first representative function was a statement of intent relating to not local but national politics, in a move which was to become commonplace during the lifetime of the rural district councils. The councils passed a number of resolutions castigating the government for the injustice of the financial relations between Britain and Ireland, demanding the provision of a Catholic University, calling for the teaching of Irish to be made a remunerative subject, and demanding a new land act with more favorable terms. Most importantly these resolutions called for Ireland to be allowed self- government in the form of Home Rule, which one council described as the "natural right of all civilized nations," pledging themselves to "continue our best efforts in the cause of Home Rule till the aspirations and labours of the Irish people be crowned [...] by having restored to them their Parliament in College Green."<sup>82</sup> In so doing, these first meetings in nationalist-dominated areas gave credence to the opinions professed by a host of opponents of the new legislation, that the new councils would be utilized to further a nationalist separatist agenda. Naturally, in areas with unionist majorities or where the councils were reasonably evenly split, these nationalist resolutions were absent.

## Conclusion

The Local Government (Ireland) Act of 1898 then only partially succeeded in its aims. In attempting to bring parity to all citizens of the United Kingdom in terms of local self-government, the act was a success. The small inequalities which remained were discernible but posed insufficient grounds for complaint, as evidenced by the lack of negativity voiced towards the operation of local government once it had been established. In fact, as a measure of local government reform, one contemporary commentator went so far as to state that the act was:

[A] model of accuracy, fullness and clearness when compared with many of a much less ambitious scope. The whole of Ireland—topographical, municipal, rural, judicial, political and social seems to have been clearly and constantly before the mind's eye of the draftsman, and the various clauses display a minute and accurate knowledge of every phase of Irish life.<sup>83</sup>

An examination of the operation of the local authorities created under the act lends further credence to the success of the reforms. Under the care of the local authorities, a raft of social reforms were introduced and administered so that, by the onset of the War of Independence, the lowest class of social housing had been almost entirely removed, replaced instead by sanitary social housing; sewerage and water supply schemes had been extended across the island; environmental standards had been transformed and as a result of these public health and sanitation efforts, deaths due to infectious diseases had declined substantially. The successful administration of local functions bestowed on local communities by the state illustrates the extent to which local representatives engaged with and enacted state legislation. Local authorities grew increasingly adept at ensuring local compliance with state policies and, in time, the relationship between the Local Government Board and the local representatives became more akin to that in Britain. From a purely practical viewpoint, these were local authorities acting as agents of the state in local

communities, receiving cooperation from the local population. In this way, the techniques and rationales of governmentality inherent in the legislation succeeded in creating imperial citizens operating on an equal par with their fellow citizens in Britain and within the confines established by the state.

On the other hand, however, as the preceding section has illustrated, the Irish population showed themselves equally adept at circumventing legislative restrictions and, through their choice of representatives and the resolutions passed at the first meetings of nationalist councils, they issued a clear and direct warning about their plans for their new-found local autonomy. The platform provided for local populations to elect local representatives reflective of their political perspectives was used to great effect, and these local authorities became the training grounds for many who later became nationalist politicians. That the provision of local government reform was utilized by the local population in a way directly opposing its intended aims is reflective of Whelan's findings, which outline the political role carved out by the nationalist-dominated Dublin Corporation, particularly through its creation of a nationalist Dublin streetscape in the late nineteenth century.<sup>84</sup> Thus, the reform of local government in 1898 did little to alter the ambiguous position of Ireland in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. From the state's perspective, the legislation offered a distinct opportunity for decolonization and imperial integration, while from the Irish nationalist perspective it offered an opportunity for decolonization through separation and national autonomy. These two opposing ideals eventually imploded between 1919 and 1921 in the War of Independence. Ultimately, however, and despite the rumbling nationalist overtones, at a local level the Irish population did engage as orderly citizens with the administration of local government between 1899 and 1918. This period then is unique in that it is the one point in Irish history when the Irish population engaged fully at a local level with the rationales of the British state as imperial citizens and agents of that state.

### Acknowledgements

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### NOTES

- 1 Kevin Whelan, "The Catholic Parish, the Catholic Chapel and Village Development in Ireland," *Irish Geography* 16, no. 1 (1983): 1-15, 4-5. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00750778309478868>
- 2 This gap was eventually addressed by the publication of Terrence McDonough, ed., *Was Ireland a Colony? Economics, Politics and Culture in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2005). Although, as one reviewer commented, "the majority of the essays accept Ireland's colonial status as unproblematic, and as such present an overly simplified picture of nineteenth-century Ireland." John McLean, "Review of Terrence McDonough, 'Was Ireland a Colony? Economics, Politics and Culture in Nineteenth-Century Ireland,'" *The Journal of British Studies* 45 (2006): 440-441. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/504219>
- 3 The majority of legislative innovations involved increasing state centralization of the everyday administration of Ireland. In the period up to the passing of the Catholic Relief Act in 1829, legislative reform was piecemeal, but included the amalgamation of the Treasuries and the centralization of the supervision of lunatic asylums in 1817; the creation of a centralized Board of Health in 1820 and the reform of the prison system in 1826. The

- period between 1830 and 1845 saw a more sustained engagement with the reform of Irish administration witnessing the establishment of a Commission of Education, the Board of Works and the Poor Law Commission. For a more detailed discussion, see Robert B. McDowell, *The Irish Administration, 1801-1914* (London: Routledge, 1964); chapter 2 in Virginia Crossman, *Politics, Law and Order in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1996); and Oliver MacDonagh, "Ideas and Institutions, 1830-45", in *A New History of Ireland, V. Ireland under the Union, 1. 1801-70*, ed. William E. Vaughan (Oxford, United Kingdom: Clarendon Press, 1989), 206-225.
- 4 John Andrews, *Shapes of Ireland: Maps and Their Makers, 1564 - 1839* (Dublin: Geography Publications, 1997), 248.
  - 5 The most significant concession in this regard was the creation of the boards of guardians under the Poor Relief (Ireland) Act of 1838. Under this legislation, three-quarters of the board's membership was elected by local ratepayers, marking a major departure from the landlord-dominated and -selected local bodies which existed up to this point. The colonial nature of relations during the famine is clearly illustrated throughout the *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine*, ed. John Crowley, Michael Murphy, William J. Smyth (Cork: Cork University Press, 2012) but particularly in Willie Smyth "The *longue durée*: Imperial Britain and Colonial Ireland," 46-63, and David Nally "The Colonial Dimensions of the Great Irish Famine," 64-74. See also Christine Kinealy, "Was Ireland a Colony? The Evidence of the Great Famine," in *Was Ireland a Colony?*, ed. McDonough, 48-65.
  - 6 The elected element of the boards of guardians was later reduced to half, as compensation for the transfer of the burden of the poor rate to those who owned property valued at over £4. A detailed account of the legislation and financing provided by the state to revolutionize landownership in Ireland is provided in: Terence Dooley, *The Big Houses and Landed Estates of Ireland: A Research Guide* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), 97-105; and William Nolan, "Land Reform in Post-Famine Ireland," in *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine*, eds. Crowley, Murphy and Smyth, 570-579. Details of the wave of legislative innovations introduced from the 1870s onwards is provided in Robert B. McDowell, "Administration and the public services, 1870-1921," in *A New History of Ireland, VI. Ireland under the Union, II. 1870-1921*, ed. William E. Vaughan (Oxford, United Kingdom: Clarendon Press, 1996), 579-585.
  - 7 Gerry Kearns, "Nation, Empire and Cosmopolis: Ireland and the Break with Britain," in *Geographies of British Modernity: Space and Society in the Twentieth Century*, eds. David Gilbert, David Matless, and Brian Short (Oxford UK: Blackwell, 2003), 204-228, 204.
  - 8 James Anderson and Liam O'Dowd, "Imperialism and Nationalism: The Home Rule Struggle and Border Creation in Ireland, 1885-1925," *Political Geography* 26, no. 8 (2007): 934-950. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S096262980700128X>
  - 9 Anderson and O'Dowd, "Imperialism and Nationalism," 938, 935.
  - 10 The obstructionist policy of the Irish Parliamentary Party was aimed at disrupting the daily business in the House of Commons in order to force the House to deal with Irish issues. The policy involved the party's MPs giving long speeches on every issue brought before the House of Commons, many of which had little or no relevance to the question at hand.
  - 11 These lectures have been translated into English and are available as Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France 1977-1978*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007 [2004]). Foucault's lecture four from this series was previously published in several works as "Governmentality" including in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality with Two Lectures by and an Interview with Michel Foucault*, eds. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 87-104 and *The Essential Works of Foucault, 1954 - 1984: Power*, Vol. 3, ed. James Faubion (London UK: Penguin, 2002), 201-222.



- 12 Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 108.
- 13 Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 108. These ideas are expanded through deeper historical analysis in the subsequent *The Birth of Biopolitics* lecture series, which have been translated into English and are available as Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France 1978-1979*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008 [2004]).
- 14 Jonathan Murdoch and Nkil Ward, "Governmentality and Territoriality: The Statistical Manufacture of Britain's 'National Farm'," *Political Geography* 16, no. 4 (1997): 307-324, 308. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0962629896000078>
- 15 Of particular note are Blake's discussion of pastoral power in British Columbia, Lynn Blake, "Pastoral Power, Governmentality and Cultures of Order in Nineteenth-Century British Columbia," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 24, no. 1 (1999): 79-93. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/623341>; Hannah's examination of the expansion of the nation state in West America, Matthew Hannah, *Governmentality and the Mastery of Territory in Nineteenth-Century America* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Jones' investigation of the legitimization of the English state in early modern Wales, Rhys Jones, "Practising State Consolidation in Early Modern England and Wales," *Political Geography* 23, no. 5 (2004): 597-624. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0962629804000253>; Legg's discussion of population management in colonial India, Stephen Legg, "Foucault's Population Geographies: Classifications, Biopolitics and Governmental Spaces," *Population, Space and Place* 11, no. 3 (2005): 137-156. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/psp.357/abstract>; Crampton and Elden's edited collection providing an overview of Foucault's engagement with geography and geography's engagement with Foucault, Jeremy W. Crampton and Stuart Elden eds., *Space, Knowledge and Power: Foucault and Geography* (Aldershot UK: Ashgate, 2007); Elden's development of a history of the concept of territory, Stuart Elden, "Government, Calculation, Territory," *Environment and Planning D. Society and Space* 25, no. 3 (2007): 562-580. <http://www.envplan.com/abstract.cgi?id=d428t>; and Kearns' forthcoming analysis of geopolitics and biopolitics in relation to the global HIV/AIDS pandemic and the Global War on Terror, Gerry Kearns, "Governing Vitalities and the Security State," *Environment and Planning D. Society and Space* (in press).
- 16 Foucault, 1980 quoted in Cole Harris, "Power, Modernity and Historical Geography," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 81, no. 4 (1991): 671-683, 674. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2563429>
- 17 Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*, (London UK: Duke University Press, 1995), 1.
- 18 Stephen Legg, "Beyond the European Province: Foucault and Postcolonialism," in *Space, Knowledge and Power: Foucault and Geography*, eds. Crampton and Elden, 265-289.
- 19 John Morrissey, "Foucault and the Colonial Subject: Emergent Forms of Colonial Governmentality in Early Modern Ireland," in *At the Anvil: Essays in Honour of William J Smyth*, eds. Patrick Duffy and William Nolan (Dublin: Geography Publications, 2012), 135-150; David Nally, *Human Encumbrances: Political Violence and the Great Irish Famine* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2011); David Nally, "That Coming Storm: the Irish Poor Law, Colonial Biopolitics and the Great Irish Famine," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 98, no. 3 (2008): 714-741, [doi:10.1080/00045600802118426](https://doi.org/10.1080/00045600802118426). In addition, see contributions by Nessa Cronin and Kevin Loughed in this issue.
- 20 Patrick Duffy "'Nearly all that Geography can Require': The State and the Construction of a Geographic Archive in Nineteenth-Century Ireland," in *At the Anvil*, eds. Duffy and Nolan, 371-391, 372.

- 21 Quoted in Graham Burchell, "Liberal Government and Techniques of the Self" [1993], in *Foucault and Political Reason: Liberalism, Neo-Liberalism and Rationalities of Government*, eds. Andrew Barry, Thomas Osborne, and Nicholas Rose (London: UCL Press, 1996), 19-36, 19.
- 22 Legg, "Foucault's Population Geographies: Classifications, Biopolitics and Governmental Spaces," 137-156, 147. See also Margo Huxley, "Geographies of Governmentality," in *Space, Knowledge and Power*, eds. Crampton and Elden, 185-204, where a wide range of Foucault's writings are drawn together to offer a detailed consideration of the "conduct of conduct."
- 23 Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 105.
- 24 Foucault, 1981 quoted in Clive Barnett, "Culture, Geography, and the Arts of Government," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 19, no. 1 (2001): 7-24, 16. In this article Barnett teases out the existence of references to resistance and dissent in the work of Foucault, drawing on Gordon's work outlining the implementation of governmental techniques in the context of the liberal, laissez-faire state. See Colin Gordon, "Governmental Rationality: An Introduction," in *The Foucault Effect*, eds. Burchell, Gordon and Miller, 1-52.
- 25 Joseph Ruane, "Colonialism and Irish Historical Development," in *Approaching the Past: Historical Anthropology through Irish Case Studies*, eds. Marilyn Silverman and Philip H. Gulliver (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 293-323, 295.
- 26 Eamonn Slater and Terrence McDonough, "Marx on Nineteenth-Century Colonial Ireland: Analysing Colonialism as a Dynamic Social Process," *Irish Historical Studies* 36, no. 142 (2008): 153-172. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20720271>
- 27 John Morley (1903) quoted in Barbara Solow, *The Land Question and the Irish Economy, 1870 - 1903* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), 16.
- 28 Tom Garvin, *The Evolution of Irish Nationalist Politics* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 2005), 77-98.
- 29 Gailey outlines how the tag name for constructive unionism—Killing Home Rule With Kindness—resulted from a quotation of Gerald Balfour's that was widely misconstrued by contemporaries. He stated that the Conservatives would "be glad enough, no doubt, to kill home rule with kindness if we could but, whatever may be the result of our efforts, our intention is do our utmost to introduce and pass such measures as will really promote the interests of the material prosperity of Ireland," quoted in Andrew Gailey, "Unionist Rhetoric and Irish Local Government Reform, 1895-9," *Irish Historical Studies* 24, no. 93 (1984): 52-68, 58. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30008026>. The promotion of this tag name oversimplified an intricate Conservative Party policy towards Ireland, which stood independent of this aim.
- 30 Several studies, however, have mistakenly credited all these developments to Arthur.
- 31 Gailey, "Unionist rhetoric," 55.
- 32 Crossman, "Local Government in Nineteenth-Century Ireland," in *Was Ireland a Colony?*, ed. McDonough, 102-116, 110; William Feingold, *The Revolt of the Tenantry: The Transformation of Local Government in Ireland, 1872-1886* (Boston MA: Northeastern University Press, 1984).
- 33 *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, 4th Series, 53, 21 February 1898, 1244. For more see: Robert B. McDowell, "Administration and the Public Services, 1870-1921," in *A New History of Ireland*, VI, ed. Vaughan, 579-585.
- 34 For this figure, how it was calculated and how such an inequity came about, see two papers by N.J. Synott: "Some Features of the Over-Taxation of Ireland," *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland* 10, no. 77 (1897): 251-268; and "Over-Taxation and Expenditure in Ireland," *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland* 10, no. 79 (1899): 404-432.

- 35 The agricultural rating grant was a fund that had been issued to alleviate agricultural distress across the United Kingdom in 1895. Ireland's share of this grant had still not been produced by 1898 on the grounds that the local government system in Ireland was not fit for purpose.
- 36 Denis O'Hearn, "Ireland in the Atlantic Economy," in *Was Ireland a Colony?* ed. McDonough, 3-26.
- 37 Gailey, "Unionist Rhetoric," 61.
- 38 Foucault, quoted in Burchell, "Liberal Government and Techniques of the Self," 19.
- 39 Letter from Plunkett to Cadogan, 12 September 1899; quoted in Gailey, "Unionist Rhetoric," 63.
- 40 Richard Haslam, "The origins of Irish Local Government," in *Local Government in Ireland, Inside Out*, eds. Mark Callanan and Justin F. Keogan (Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, 2003), 14-40, 18.
- 41 Haslam, "The origins of Irish Local Government," 19. New Town Commissioners were eventually introduced in 1854 under the Towns Improvement Act.
- 42 The state had little cause for concern about the elected element of the boards initially. The property qualification for representatives, the cumulative voting enshrined in the act, deference to local landlords and the public nature of the ballot all ensured that there was little in the way of a shift in local control until the 1880s.
- 43 Poor law unions were established as rational administrative units based on approximately a ten-mile radius around a central market town. For more see: Arlene Crampsie, "Impacts of the Workhouse Network and Poor Relief: A Donegal Case Study," *Geographical Viewpoint* 32 (2004): 42-50.
- 44 MacDonagh, "Politics, 1830-1845," in *A New History of Ireland, V*, ed. Vaughan, 169-192, 180. The Medical Charities Act of 1851 removed the subsidization of dispensaries from the grand juries and placed the creation, maintenance and day-to-day running of these in the hands of the boards of guardians, with the administration of fever hospitals. The guardians became responsible for the control of burial grounds in 1856, and in 1863 they were granted the power to register births and deaths. They also gathered a range of functions relating to all aspects of social life including the building of laborers' cottages, the supply of seed, and the prevention and removal of nuisances. They gained powers relating to the notification and prevention of infectious and contagious diseases, in both animals and humans, under the Public Health Act of 1878, which made the board of guardians the rural sanitary authority in their union, and in 1896 they were made responsible for making legislation in relation to the speed and design of motor cars; see: McDowell, *The Irish Administration*, 189.
- 45 This is the full title of the act, commonly referred to as the Local Government (Ireland) Act, which was passed into legislation as 61&62 Vict. c. 37. All the information in this section, unless otherwise stated is taken from the provisions of the act.
- 46 51&52 Vict. c. 41; 56&57 Vict. c. 73.
- 47 The legal functions of the grand juries were retained right up to the creation of the Free State in 1922, although in practice they were largely ignored from the foundation of the Sinn Féin courts during the War of Independence.
- 48 In these instances, the poor law union could be split into two or three district councils provided each portion was of sufficient size to function as a local authority. Where the portion divided would be too small, a redrawing of county boundaries was necessitated.
- 49 *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, 4th Series, 53, 21 February 1898, 1228.
- 50 24&25 Vict. c. 97.

- 51 *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, 4th Series, 56, 28 April 1898, 1487, 1502.
- 52 61&62 Vict. c. 37, clause 5.
- 53 The only group actively excluded by the legislation was the Irish clergy in an attempt to keep sectarian and religious tensions off the newly created local bodies.
- 54 This occurred under the Local Authorities (Ireland) (Qualification of Women) Act 1&2 Geo. V c. 35
- 55 61&62 Vict. c. 37, Clause 49 (3)
- 56 Twenty-Seventh Annual Report under "The Local Government Board (Ireland) Act", 35 and 36 Vic. c.69, Year Ending 31st March 1899, 1899, c.9480, xxxix, 35; *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, 4th Series, 53, 21 February 1898, 1241.
- 57 *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, 4th Series, 56, 27 April 1898, 1299-1308.
- 58 *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, 4th Series, 57, 2 May 1898, 95-123.
- 59 W. Micks to Gerald Balfour, 2nd May 1898; the UK National Archives, Balfour Papers, PRO/30/60/24.
- 60 Lord Cadogan to Gerald Balfour, 30th April 1898; the UK National Archives, Balfour Papers, PRO/30/60/24. Cadogan's request was duly granted as the next appointee to the Local Government Board was Robert Bagwell, D.L., a member of a leading Dublin unionist family, Twenty Seventh Annual Report under "The Local Government Board (Ireland) Act", 99.
- 61 This move was also reflective of a more general trend at the top level of the Irish administration. The gradual process of greening Dublin Castle has been documented by Lawrence McBride, *The Greening of Dublin Castle: The Transformation of Bureaucratic and Judicial Personnel in Ireland, 1892-1922* (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1991); and Fergus Campbell, "Who Ruled Ireland: The Irish Administration, 1879-1914," *The Historical Journal* 50, no. 3 (2007): 623-644. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0018246X07006280>
- 62 Crossman, "Local Government in Nineteenth-Century Ireland."
- 63 Miles Ogborn, "Local Power and State Regulation in Nineteenth Century Britain," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers New Series* 17, no. 2 (1992): 215-226. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/622547>
- 64 Christine Bellamy, *Administering Central-Local Relations, 1871-1919: The Local Government Board in its Fiscal and Cultural Context* (Manchester UK: Manchester University Press, 1988).
- 65 The material used in the remainder of this section is taken from a comparative study conducted on the rural district councils of Donegal and Meath in Crampsie, *Governmentality and Locality: An Historical Geography of Rural District Councils in Ireland, 1898 - 1925* (PhD Thesis: Trinity College Dublin, 2008).
- 66 There was a substantial amount of debate over whether the divisions should elect one or two members. One-seat divisions were passed in the House of Commons, but the Lords inserted the two-seat dictum in the hope that the extra seat would allow for minority representation on the councils. The district electoral divisions had been laid down during the establishment of the Poor Law. The commissioners had tried to ensure that they were almost uniform in terms of population density and area, with a maximum of twenty in each union, while the drawing up of their boundaries was to avoid, as much as possible, the division of estates (Sixth Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners, 1840, c.245, xvii.397). In practice many unions and therefore districts, particularly in the West, had significantly more. Glenties Rural District had an elected membership of sixty before co-options took place.
- 67 Twenty-Seventh Annual Report under "The Local Government Board (Ireland) Act", 32.



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- 68 *The Derry Journal*, 8 March 1899, 8. The details in the *Meath Chronicle* for this period are quite poor and as a result many of the examples here are taken from *The Derry Journal*, the only paper covering Donegal in the period in question.
- 69 *The Derry Journal*, 1 February 1899, 3.
- 70 *The Derry Journal*, 20 February 1899, 3.
- 71 *Meath Chronicle*, 4 February 1899.
- 72 *The Derry Journal*, 10 February 1899, 3.
- 73 *The Derry Journal*, 18 January 1899, 3.
- 74 *The Derry Journal*, 15 February 1899, 2.
- 75 *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, 4th Series, 21 February 1898, 1248-1249.
- 76 *The Derry Journal*, 17 February 1899, 8.
- 77 *The Derry Journal*, 10 February 1899, 5.
- 78 *The Derry Journal*, 22 February 1899, 8.
- 79 *The Derry Journal*, 7 April 1899, 8.
- 80 All of the above accounts are taken from *The Derry Journal*, 10 April 1899, 7-8.
- 81 Twenty Eighth Annual Report under "The Local Government Board (Ireland) Act", 35 and 36 Vic. c.69, Year Ending 31st March 1900, 1902, Cd.338, xxxv, 20.
- 82 *The Derry Journal*, 17 April 1899, 7.
- 83 W.J. Johnston, "The Coming Changes in Irish Local Government," *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society* 10, no. 78 (1898): 366-378, 368.
- 84 Yvonne Whelan, "Monuments, power and contested space – the iconography of Sackville Street (O'Connell Street) before Independence (1922)," *Irish Geography* 34, no.1 (2001): 11-33.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00750770109555774>

# The Elephant in the Room: Colonialism, Postcolonialism, and Northern Ireland<sup>1</sup>

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**ABSTRACT:** In this paper I address the position of Northern Irish Protestants within (or without) discourses of colonialism and postcolonialism on the island of Ireland. I contend that this position is a problematic one, which calls into question certain assumptions about the colonial or postcolonial nature of Ireland historically and in the present day. Further, I suggest much theory on the subject neglects the complexities of the relationship between contemporary Northern Irish Protestants and the seventeenth-century colonization of Ulster. This is a pity, because it limits understanding of the historical and ongoing conflict in Northern Ireland, as well as concepts of identity and place. I use an autobiographical methodology as a means of reflecting on the multiplicity of individual stories, and the role they might play in opening out discussion of colonial legacies and postcolonial contexts in Northern Ireland and Ireland today.

In 2010 and 2011, I worked on a project called Troubling Ireland. Conceived by Danish curators Kuratorisk Aktion, its aim was to explore the operations of capitalism, colonialism and postcolonialism in contemporary Ireland. The project unfolded through a series of workshops attended by a group of artists and curators and held over the course of a year in Dublin, Manorhamilton in County Leitrim, Belfast and Limerick. The Manorhamilton workshop addressed the reproduction of colonial patterns of thought and behavior within global capitalism. Acknowledging the town's plantation history, artist Anna Macleod shaped the workshop around the town's forgotten histories and contemporary currents of politico-religious conflict. She asked me to speak from my research as a cultural geographer, including work I had done on lived experiences of the Irish border.

Kuratorisk Aktion have undertaken significant work on Nordic colonialism.<sup>2</sup> Danish colonialism in Greenland, they insist, has affected identity and society in both countries, despite the fact that its "legacy [...] has remained structurally invisible on the map of global postcolonial studies."<sup>3</sup> Having extensive knowledge of the operations of colonialism in international contexts, they were interested in its ongoing effects in Ireland and made that a central theme of the project. I had studied postcolonial theory previously in relation to Ireland and found it both illuminating and frustrating. My frustration stemmed from the neglect of the problematic positioning of contemporary Northern Irish Protestants within theories defining Northern Ireland as colonial or postcolonial "depending on how you perceive the implementation of the Belfast Agreement."<sup>4</sup>

In my presentation for Troubling Ireland, I suggested—following Stephen Howe's *Ireland and Empire*—that Ireland cannot be spoken of as straightforwardly postcolonial, since there are reasons for denying it was ever a colony at all.<sup>5</sup> Tone Olaf Nielsen of Kuratorisk Aktion pointed out that colonialism is not and never was one thing only, and that even if Ireland's experience of rule by another nation was unique, it could still be called colonialism, with reason and productively. What I had (wrongly) thought to be a relatively unreflective use of the adjective 'postcolonial' for Ireland in the project documents had raised my academic and emotional hackles, but Nielsen's

response to my arguments stayed with me. I was asked to join Troubling Ireland, and throughout the following year and three further workshops I thought about why talk of Ireland as colonial and postcolonial induced a revisionist impulse in me. As Gerry Kearns notes, revisionism is in itself a postcolonial legacy, revealing anxiety about the colonial past.<sup>6</sup>

In the light of my rethinking process, I am taking this opportunity to look at the issues once more. In the paper I discuss some ways in which Ireland is defined as a former colony, and how postcolonial theory is applied to Ireland and to a lesser extent, to Northern Ireland. Much of this will be familiar ground. Then I look at the position of Northern Irish Protestants in relation to this theory. In what I have read, they—we—appear only sporadically, and when we appear, analysis of our position can be superficial and sketchy.

I use this “we” with caution. The reason I was—am, sometimes—uncomfortable with how “postcolonial” is used to describe Ireland is because I grew up in a Protestant community in Northern Ireland. As I hope to show later, this does not mean one thing, and I am cautious about identifying myself as a Northern Irish Protestant because Protestant and Catholic identities often are perceived in simplistic and sectarian terms in public discourse. Nonetheless, despite my reservations with labelling myself as such, I am shaped in some very meaningful ways as a Protestant, outside of private religious practices, and especially in the context of a still-divided Northern Ireland.<sup>7</sup> Therefore I am unable to read or talk about postcolonialism in Ireland without placing myself in relation to those theories, which tend to suggest I am a colonist, an ill-defined “problem” or nothing at all.

Because of this personal investment in the academic working out of what postcolonialism means for Northern Irish Protestants, I have chosen to frame the body of the paper through an autobiographical methodology. I believe that acknowledging subjective entanglements with academic theory is important. Within feminism, such tactics are employed to help researchers sidestep the pretence to neutrality, objectivity and separateness from the research subject once so pervasive in a patriarchal and phallogocentric academy. Donna Haraway explains her commitment to personal involvement in research so:

Following an ethical and methodological principle for science studies that I adopted many years ago, I will critically analyze, or “deconstruct”, only that which I love and only that in which I am deeply implicated.<sup>8</sup>

I avail myself of this principle, which underlies everything I write and make, and in this paper plays a major and explicit part. I also believe that stories of individual lives can contribute—at the very least—to complicating dangerously basic perceptions of the “other” in Northern Ireland (and elsewhere). Following from my discussion of colonialism and postcolonialism in Northern Ireland, and what these histories and theories mean for Northern Irish Protestants, I examine the notion of autobiography—its uses, its pitfalls and its application in academic work. I go on to outline my autobiography, including family history, with reference to how that intersects with my earlier arguments.

### **Colonialism in Ireland**

Ireland’s troubled relationship to the neighboring island has—notoriously—some eight hundred years’ pedigree. The Anglo-Normans arrived in Ireland in the twelfth century and established a number of colonies across the island, including one centered on Dublin, later called the Pale, and others in east Ulster. The Anglo-Normans are the people for whom the term “more Irish than the Irish themselves” was coined, and by degrees those who stayed in Ireland assimilated with the surrounding Gaelic population. The English made further organized attempts

at colonization during the sixteenth century, in Counties Monaghan, Armagh, Down and Antrim, but each of these failed in the face of resistance by local Gaelic lords. More successful small-scale plantations were carried out in Laois and Offaly. However, English power took effect principally in the Pale, comprising present-day County Dublin and parts of Counties Kildare, Meath and Louth. Repeatedly over the centuries, the English Crown made the use of Irish dress, customs, social structures and language illegal, but these laws were enforced unevenly and sporadically, and did not succeed in eroding Gaelic culture and society to any great extent.<sup>9</sup>

The plantations of the early seventeenth century constitute a turning point in the relationship between Ireland and England, Wales and Scotland. Generally this is agreed to have been a colonial period, however untidy, partial and ambiguous the colonial nature of that enterprise may seem. In an Ulster socially and economically devastated by the Nine Years' War, having suffered environmental ravages and significant population loss, the impact of settlement was profound and lasting. Plantation attempted the replacement of one social, political, economic and cultural system with another, with variable success. Many Irish were dispossessed, most of whom were probably chiefs and lords and their soldiers. Many others stayed where they were but lost their social structures and status and were made to pay higher rents for their lands than their new English and Scots neighbors. As the century wore on, and particularly after the anti-plantation uprising of 1641, the Irish were further disenfranchised, and their landholdings dwindled. Crucially, as many scholars agree, one of the most divisive factors in this plantation was that it happened during the Reformation. As well as laws penalizing Gaelic language, dress, social customs and land use, laws dictating adherence to the Established Church and directing religious practices were also introduced.<sup>10</sup> Historian A.T.Q. Stewart notes that because of this:

The general opinion is that the Ulster plantation added a new and unassimilable element to the Irish population... [And] from that point on, the population was sharply divided into planters and Gaels.<sup>11</sup>

The subsequent history of what began as plantation and colonization and developed into a complex colonial relationship between Ireland and Britain can be understood in many different ways. Some facts are clear: Irish resources were decimated for (largely) English and Scots profit during the initial decades of the plantation; Catholics in Ireland (mostly but not exclusively descended from the Gaelic Irish) were discriminated against to greater or lesser extents, formally and informally, from this time until independence was achieved in 1921, and continued to be discriminated against by the state in Northern Ireland until very recently;<sup>12</sup> British attitudes to, and exploitation of, Ireland at the very least exacerbated the Great Famine in the mid-1840s; and land in Ireland was concentrated in the hands of a very few from the eighteenth century until the Land Acts of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. These are just a few examples. Such historical facts alone, of course, do not account for many other important considerations, including the specific extents to which planters and natives were ethnically, culturally and socially different; the varying social and economic positions of Protestant planters within early modern Ireland and down through the centuries; levels of intermarriage and cultural cross-fertilization between planters and Gaels; the common ground perceived between Protestant and Catholic working-class communities at certain points in history; and the participation of Protestants in Irish cultural revivals. Again, just a few examples.

However, Joseph Ruane gives a definition of colonialism that chimes with the précis of plantation and list of historical injustices appearing above:



Colonialism as a process refers to the intrusion into and conquest of an inhabited territory by representatives (formal and informal) of an external power; the displacement of the native inhabitants (elites and/or commoners) from resources and positions of power; the subsequent exercise of economic, political and cultural control over the territory and native population by the intruders and their descendants, in their own interests and in the name and interests of the external power.<sup>13</sup>

Each of these phenomena has been invoked (either to be affirmed or challenged) in the debate among advocates and opponents of postcolonial theory over whether Ireland was a colony at all. From here I move to look at some arguments on both sides.

### **Postcolonialism in Ireland**

Joe Cleary believes that the idea of colonialism as a past event in Ireland was superseded in the late 1970s and early 1980s by postcolonial theory, which suggests that colonialism continues in its effects into the present day.<sup>14</sup> Postcolonial theory attracts argument and debate on varied grounds; Cleary identifies a pervading concern with what is perceived as “an unwelcome politicization of Irish cultural studies.”<sup>15</sup> Some reject the implication that Ireland’s experience is identical, or at least closely comparable, with those of so-called Third World countries like India, because of course the Irish were able to participate as colonists, administrators, missionaries and governors within a British imperial framework, which positioned them at times and in places very differently from other colonized subjects. Others point to specific characteristics of the relationship between England (later Britain) and Ireland that differentiate it from England/Britain’s relationship with every other colony, including the Act of Union in 1801, when Ireland was subsumed into the United Kingdom. Howe indicated in 2000 that many postcolonial analyses of contemporary Ireland related to literature and culture and not to economy or politics.<sup>16</sup> This lack has since been addressed. Cleary, in fact, gives an economic definition of colonialism: it was, he indicates, “an international process through which different parts of the globe were differentially integrated into an emergent world capitalist system.”<sup>17</sup> Howe also criticized the neglect of “settler colonialism” as a distinct category pertaining to a particular historical period. Further objections stem from the desire to have the Irish economy viewed within a European framework rather than, again, a “Third-World” framework; postcolonial theory invoked comparative economic development in Africa and Asia in order to explain Ireland’s recession in the 1980s and 1990s.<sup>18</sup>

Counter-arguments to all these objections abound. Clare Carroll argues that to deny Ireland’s contemporary postcolonial status is to deny that early modern Ireland was ever a colony, and there are many reasons for continuing to consider England/Britain’s relationship to Ireland a colonial one even after the Act of Union and up until independence.<sup>19</sup> These include the particular structures of local government and the position of the police, unlike those elsewhere in the United Kingdom, the existence of the Lord Lieutenantcy until independence was gained, the repeated constraints put on the Irish economy to make it subservient to the wider British economy, and British responses to Irish famine.<sup>20</sup> Cleary insists that the assumption that “there is such a thing as a standard colonial experience” is “untenable,” and making Ireland exceptional in this regard is both inaccurate and unproductive.<sup>21</sup> Likewise, Kevin Whelan cautions against “reinserting nationalist exceptionalism under the guise of complexity” in analyses of Ireland’s colonial (or non-colonial) status.<sup>22</sup> However, David Lloyd points to the crux of these debates when he states that “to assert that Ireland is and has been a colony is certainly to deny the legitimacy of British government in Northern Ireland.”<sup>23</sup> Howe believes that postcolonial theorists risk intellectual irresponsibility if they ignore “the strong contemporary political consequences which

follow from a belief that Northern Ireland is a settler colonial regime."<sup>24</sup> This is a clear echo of the revisionist debate in Irish historiography, in which "a pervasive anxiety not to give historical aid and comfort to the Provisional IRA" is attributed to those revisionists who challenged received (often perceived as nationalist) versions of Irish history.<sup>25</sup>

### **Northern Irish Protestants, colonialism and postcolonialism**

I do not deny that Ireland once was a colony. Neither do I downplay historical (including recent) injustices and oppressions visited on Irish people by, or in the name of, England and Britain. However, I do not believe that all revisionism, in history or in postcolonial theory, is grounded only (or mainly) in anxiety about the contemporary political repercussions of acknowledging an often-terrible colonial history. Some of it reiterates history's multifaceted and complex nature. I do believe theorists must consider the effect of statements on Northern Ireland's colonial status on its present populations. When Kevin Whelan writes that "Ireland was England's oldest colony, as well as its first postcolony; Northern Ireland was its last colony," this declaration is in some senses simply factual, but in others partial, and (potentially) ideologically loaded.<sup>26</sup> Likewise, Terry Eagleton's assessment of the situation in Northern Ireland seems to allow for, yet actually denies, historical change and development:

[S]ettler colonialism... is when they do not only suppress your language and plunder your resources but actually have the impudence to come and live with you. Why is it plausible not to see Northern Ireland as a colony? [... One] reason is the colonial settlers there form the majority, and have been there long enough to feel quite as much at home as Celts in Kerry.<sup>27</sup>

He thus recognizes that "colonial settlers" have come to feel at home in Northern Ireland, but to call present-day Protestants "colonial settlers" is, I contend, dangerously ahistorical. If (as I presume) he is referring to Protestants, or perhaps unionists, these groups are neither identical nor exclusively the descendants of English, Scots and Welsh colonial settlers in Ireland in the period between the twelfth and seventeenth centuries. With this in mind, and given the four centuries that have elapsed since the plantation, in what sense can either Protestants or unionists in Northern Ireland today as a group be called 'settlers'? Eagleton's statement demonstrates what Sandra Scham terms "a persistent lack of nuanced examination" evident in postcolonial studies.<sup>28</sup>

Any nuanced examination of colonialism and postcolonialism in Ireland must dwell on its planter communities and their descendants. The notion of "settlers" is given some space in postcolonial theory, but according to Pamela Clayton, not much, and that relatively recently; she contends that "Ulster's position as a settler colony [...] was, for most of the twentieth century, completely overlooked in the academic literature."<sup>29</sup> In the twenty-first century, Clare Carroll acknowledges that postcolonial theory can fail "to distinguish between different kinds of colonialism-between that in settler and non-settler countries[, for example]."<sup>30</sup> Whelan refers to (but does not expand upon) "the intractable 'settler' problem of the unionist population of the North," again, ignored in much of postcolonial studies.<sup>31</sup> Lorenzo Veracini traces the history of the concept of "settler colonialism," pointing out that "building settler colonies and the exercise of colonial domination, while different, should be seen as inescapably intertwined."<sup>32</sup> He considers settler colonialism to be: "[A]bout turning a place and a specific human material into something else, and, paradoxically and simultaneously, about a specific human material that remains true to itself in a place that is 'other.'"<sup>33</sup> Veracini makes the further point that "where it is most triumphant, settler colonialism effectively covers its tracks."<sup>34</sup> Settler colonialism in Ulster has failed, singularly, to cover its tracks, because it never was complete.

Cleary's analysis allows for settlers as a distinct "independent third factor" in the imperial relationship between the "mother-country" and the colonized natives, noting that unlike administrators, settlers' investments in a colony were land- and property-based, therefore rooted, and likely to be vigorously defended when threatened. He also recognizes that the initial distinctions between settlers and natives were not fixed for all time:

It has been suggested [that] neither ethnic descent nor culture but religion became the major index that distinguished between colonizer and colonized in early modern Ireland... Because colonial processes change over time, however, it may also be the case that the indices that distinguished between colonizer and colonized changed also, and that the ways in which religion, culture and ethnicity were articulated with each other to demarcate the divide varied from one conjuncture to the next.<sup>35</sup>

This, I believe, is a crucial point. At some points in history there have been "settler" populations, as opposed to "native" populations, in Ireland. Certain features made them distinct from each other. These features were not then, and are not now, immutable. From that time to this, broadly speaking, there have been two "distinct" and often at-odds communities in the north of Ireland, one of which has been dominant and more or less oppressive until recently. But the people comprising each community are likely to have a substantial amount in common, socially, economically, even culturally, and certainly ethnically, if not religiously. Archaeologist Audrey Horning proposes that material culture from the early modern period gives the lie to any idea of "a binary opposition between colonizer and colonized," and she advocates "models which [...] allow for the fluid dynamism of identity and interactions precipitated by the colonial experience" as offering "an alternative of real social relevance" in Northern Ireland today; especially important in a place where "perceptions of colonialism remain paramount to the construction of contemporary identities."<sup>36</sup>

Albert Memmi writes of colonialism "manufactur[ing]" colonists as well as colonized.<sup>37</sup> Tadhg O'Keeffe refers to the idea that "both 'natives' and 'colonists' are transformed (and therefore become postcolonial?) at the very moment of contact."<sup>38</sup> And Robert Young, touching on the performance of sameness over time characteristic of both nationalist and unionist Ireland, notes that "fixity of identity is only sought in situations of instability and disruption, of conflict and change."<sup>39</sup> These formulations all contribute to our "consideration of historical human subjects and their social relations as subjects and objects" within colonial and postcolonial contexts.<sup>40</sup> However, just as simple models of colonizer/colonized relationships based on absolute and enduring difference are irresponsible and unsustainable, so uncritical notions of interaction and mutual transformation are also problematic, where they deny real operations of power between two groups.

This brings me to my foundational concern with colonial contexts and postcolonial legacies in Northern Ireland and Ireland—is it possible to acknowledge colonialism, and recognize and condemn its injustice, while simultaneously insisting that, in the present, it is inaccurate and inappropriate to define Protestants in Ireland as colonizers? Is it possible, as a Northern Irish Protestant today, to admit to a sense of shame and guilt at ancestral land-grabbing (and possibly numerous other exploitative and oppressive acts), to point to its wrongness, while simultaneously insisting that I am neither a settler nor a colonist, and at this stage in history have as much right to belong where I was born as an Irish Catholic?<sup>41</sup>

### **Autobiographical approaches**

In 2000 a publication called *Bear in Mind* appeared, compiled by an organization called An Crann The Tree and published in Belfast. Its purpose was to give some people affected by the Troubles a

platform from which to tell their stories, and Northern Irish poet John Hewitt was quoted in the introduction by way of explanation:

Bear in mind these dead  
I can find no plainer words.

The careful words of my injunction  
are unrhetorical, as neutral  
and unaligned as any I know:  
they propose no more than thoughtful response.<sup>42</sup>

The telling of individual stories is not unproblematic in Northern Ireland, as in any post- or mid-conflict society. Not all stories are considered equal, and indeed some elicit active offence or deep hurt; there is then the question of whose stories are heard, and when, where and by whom. Nonetheless, personal stories can be powerful. Listening to stories from the “other” side, when that is possible, can make what has been unknown and threatening become human and legible, if not shared. John Hewitt’s measured words resonate with Kevin Whelan’s notion of “ethical witness,” achieved when a person establishes a certain distance between what she is born to and what she aspires to, thus enabling her to “address [her]self to [her] culture.”<sup>43</sup>

I believe this applies to colonial contexts and postcolonial legacies too. The potential political (and human) consequences of continuing to apply provocative labels like “native” and “settler” in Northern Ireland are grave. Individual lives and family histories always offer a more complex story of negotiated identities, interdependence and integration, mixing, exchange and ambiguity, as well as difference, conflict and hostility, than that which is evident in public narratives. Horning points to what she calls “the potentially subversive impact of a deeper historical understanding,” while history may be seen as the cause of contemporary conflict in Northern Ireland, some also see it as mitigating, if used differently.<sup>44</sup>

For this reason, I have chosen to be explicit about my personal position in relation to the issues discussed in this paper, and to make use of autobiographical information in framing them. I aim to tell something of my own story as a contribution to complicating sectarian simplicities, and as an attempt at offering a form of Whelan’s “ethical witness.” I hope that in telling this story I can show movement from that to which I was born towards that to which I aspire, and then a (somewhat uneasy) settling between the two.

Autobiography is—unsurprisingly—not a simple process of using “I” and “me” and recounting one’s life story, or bits of it. Matthew Hollow refers to the use of life history in academic writing as an “autobiographical performance;” this performance can be one of unity, coherence and the inevitability of destiny, or it can be about multiplicity, ambiguity and the stumbling way in which life unfolds.<sup>45</sup> Hollow acknowledges arguments about whether it is a valid strategy to insert personal stories into academic texts but contends that “the personal” is always already in these texts, whether or not by the explicit intention of the author.<sup>46</sup> Further, the autobiographical subject may assume a “label” (such as “woman”), and in this case, autobiographical content may position the author as representative of a group. As Hollow suggests, the subjective voice “becomes less about the individual who is performing than on whose behalf the individual is performing.”<sup>47</sup> Regardless of the motivation for including autobiography, and the purpose to which it is put, Hollow believes that the most successful uses evidence “a self-critical style of self-writing,” admitting ambivalence, memory gaps and other disruptions to personal narratives.<sup>48</sup> Jaume Aurell too approves “experimental autobiographers” who “narrate within an epistemologically sceptical frame.”<sup>49</sup>



Nancy Miller considers the use of autobiography to have roots in “an earlier feminist critique of universal values.”<sup>50</sup> She recognizes that openly personal content in academic writing for some is “an occasion to mourn the loss of literary standards, critical objectivity and philosophical rigor.”<sup>51</sup> Miller, however, believes that autobiography—in this case, memoir—is “a democratic form, giving voice to minority experience,” and its unenthusiastic reception in some quarters may be as much to do with women’s “predominance” within the genre as anything else.<sup>52</sup> Rocío G. Davies indicates that in feminist terms, autobiography can be a political catalyst because “private stories support the articulation of public histories.”<sup>53</sup> Telling complex private stories may, therefore, support the complication of crude public narratives.

I appropriate two definitions to frame my own autobiographical experiment here: first is Miller’s idea of memoir as “the record of an experience in search of a community.”<sup>54</sup> As I have explained, one of my difficulties with postcolonial theory on Ireland is the absence, or one-dimensional presence, of Irish and Northern Irish Protestants. Where “unionists” are dwelt upon, as in F.C. McGrath’s paper on Ulster unionism and postcolonial theory, I generally do not recognize myself (nor all those Protestants I know who are not unionists).<sup>55</sup> My hope is that one brief but nuanced portrait may elicit recognition (and possibly identification) in others identifying themselves as Protestant, and contribute to disrupting sectarian certainties and simplifications. The second definition is Jaume Aurell’s notion of academic autobiography as “an intentional and creative positioning of oneself in history, geography and culture.”<sup>56</sup> My academic interests in place and identity are driven by my personal attachment to, and difficulties with, those concepts: the difficulties arise in part from my historical, geographical and cultural position as a Northern Irish Protestant. Therefore, I think of all my work, visual and academic, as ways of engaging with this history, geography and culture; what amounts to an ongoing struggle to unfold, understand, interrogate and critique. In my work for *Troubling Ireland*, and in this paper, I have made the personal nature of that engagement explicit.

### **My autobiography**

I was born in 1978 and brought up in Holywood, in County Down. Both parents’ families had been living in Holywood for a few generations. My mother’s father, Derek Eves, traced his descent from seventeenth-century planters. A John Eves was born to planter parents in Wicklow in 1641, and the Irish branch of the family grew from there, bringing in O’Briens, Caugheys, O’Neills, Webbs, MacGregors, Simmses, Greeveses and Munsters among others. The Eveses were, in the twentieth century, members of the Exclusive Brethren church, a strict sect verging on the cultish; most of the family left in the 1950s.

My grandfather’s family was involved in a number of businesses that had generated substantial wealth through the nineteenth century and continued to do so in the twentieth century. These included a timber import firm, set up in 1810 by a Norwegian-Danish forebear called Paul Løvenørn Munster and, later, linen mills. Derek Eves directed an engineering company called Munster Simms. His work entailed frequent international travel, and I remember my grandparents’ house as being filled with exotic ornaments, books and clothes, and giving the impression of wealth and sophistication.

These factors probably contributed to the Eves family’s location somewhat outside the mainstream of Protestant culture in Northern Ireland. Members of the Exclusive Brethren church separate themselves as rigorously from other Protestants as from Catholics, and in my family their overwhelming preoccupation with religious practices did not leave much room for political engagement. Wealth too can act as a political insulator, at least in terms of politico-religious conflict, if not in terms of class privilege. My grandfather was at least culturally nationalist, according to my mother: in turn she communicated to me some sense of being Irish, or Northern Irish, but as an ambivalent identity, one among many, and not the most important.

My father's grandfather, Henry Reid, came from the Lowlands of Scotland to settle in Belfast in the early twentieth century. He is supposed to have fled an abusive and very religious father, a story invoked in the family to explain their prevalently atheist attitude. He married a Belfast woman, Martha McIntosh, and they had three sons and a daughter. Henry was a cabinet-maker at the Harland and Wolff shipyard, and Martha ran a shop. Their eldest son, Ernest, was my grandfather. He went to university and became a civil engineer.

Ernest had a tumultuous and deeply unhappy family life. His first wife left him and their three children, and he had three more children with his second wife, including my father. He was an alcoholic and a gambler, and when he died of stomach cancer at 42, the family wealth evaporated. Although the Reids were positioned culturally as Protestants in Northern Ireland, they avoided religious practices, and politically were not only outside of, but actively hostile to, the Protestant and unionist mainstream. Ernest put himself forward as an independent (socialist) candidate for Holywood council in the 1950s.

My father grew up in the same social milieu that my sisters and I would occupy thirty years later—in Holywood's Protestant middle class, educated at the local state-funded grammar school. He left school with almost no qualifications, due to undiagnosed dyslexia and the overwhelming dysfunction of his home life, and moved into low-paid work, unlike most of his Holywood peers, who were becoming doctors, solicitors and engineers. My father found stability and belonging through the then-emerging house church movement and was not particularly interested in politics. Nonetheless, having no strong pre-existent sense of himself as a Northern Irish Protestant and/or unionist, he was open to engaging with nationalism. He worked and lived in Derry in the late 1960s, and with Derry friends once visited a Dublin republican who had been involved in the Easter Rising. He told me that he felt then he would have fought for Irish independence in the same circumstances.

By the time I was six, we as a family were attending a so-called charismatic church that had arisen from the house church groups my parents attended in the 1970s. The charismatic movement tended to sidestep the issue of sectarian conflict in Northern Ireland by claiming to be non-denominational, although culturally it was often Protestant in all but name. I went to a state grammar school in Holywood, ostensibly neutral but again effectively Protestant. All of my friends were from Protestant backgrounds and most were middle-class. My own family were middle-class in all respects apart from the crucial matter of income—although my parents' families were wealthy, they were emphatically not. We were able to live in what was considered an exclusive part of Holywood because my grandparents owned the house, but my parents' income was very low. Living in this area, and generally in Holywood, insulated us from some of the horrors of the Northern Irish conflict, and my sisters and I did not directly experience actual violence.

From the perspective of adulthood, and in trying to understand the emotional underpinnings of my academic and art practice, I offer these stories by way of explaining a sense of being always-already outside in Protestant middle-class Holywood. As a family we were culturally and socially Protestant, but historically and contemporarily positioned on the margins of Protestant religious practice. Further, we had a heritage of skepticism about church derived from my mother's family's experience of the Exclusive Brethren, and my father's family's atheism. I fully subscribed to the notion that charismatic Christians were neither Protestant nor Catholic, and would have argued myself not to be Protestant at all until the age of about 20. Further, I had not lost any family members to republican violence. Although by the time I was in my mid-teens I knew that my grandfather and uncle in particular had been in danger from the IRA, I had no visceral sense of being threatened by an "other." And despite the fact that we were middle-class, and on my mother's side upper-middle-class for generations, I had a sense of the precariousness of that status once I became aware of how little money my parents earned.

Also of great importance to me during childhood and adolescence were our family holidays in north Donegal. We visited a particular site each summer, to which we were introduced by family friends from Holywood. We could not afford our own caravan, and my parents always arranged to borrow one or another from their friends. Most caravan owners there when I was a child were from Holywood and members of High Street Presbyterian Church. I developed an intense attachment to this place, for many reasons, one of which was its siting in the “real” Ireland. At a certain point—I cannot remember when, but probably in my early teens—I decided that Holywood and north County Down were too urban, too industrialized, too domesticated, and above all, too unionist and Protestant, to be Irish. I wanted to be Irish, so I identified with this part of Donegal and the west of Ireland in general, and determined that I would move there as soon as I possibly could and distance myself from my roots in north Down. I ignored the fact that my attachment to Donegal was asocial, about my relationship to a landscape, not people, and firmly and romantically identified with nationalists in Irish history and in the contemporary struggles in Northern Ireland.

### Conclusion

I consider what I have described up to this point to relate to Kevin Whelan’s notion of filiation and affiliation, and I mentioned earlier that I have since settled somewhere between my filiation and affiliation points, although not comfortably. When I was eighteen or so I realized that urban, middle-class Protestants are neither always accounted for, nor always welcome, in nationalist discourse. Further study in Irish history and cultural studies turned me into something of a revisionist, although greater understanding of revisionism itself leaves me where I am now—attempting to be both skeptical and sensitive towards all identity claims. I have given a necessarily partial version of my family and personal history, and because I have an end in view—demonstrating a few facets of the multiplicity behind the label “Protestant” in Northern Ireland—I may be shaping memories and impressions to suit that end. It is difficult to determine how the sum of all my thinking on identity inflects my current sense of myself as a child and teenager. My idea of what I have inherited from my parents and grandparents is subjective and may be more about what I wanted to receive than what they had to pass on. Nonetheless, that idea is there. I recognize too that I am implicitly claiming to be representative of a group in this paper. My argument is that because I am not simply a Northern Irish Protestant in the public and popular sense (which allows for a few models—middle-class, working-class, moderate, extreme—but not much complexity), therefore nobody is “simply” a Northern Irish Protestant. The same argument applies to Northern Irish Catholics, and indeed, any identity label. I accept that such labels can be necessary and strategic, but sometimes they are put to problematic use, and exploring the individual stories behind them helps to mitigate that.

In relation to colonial contexts and postcolonial legacies, I intend my autobiography to reinforce my argument that “Protestant” in Northern Ireland does not mean “colonist.” As my family history suggests, Protestants in Northern Ireland may or may not be descended from ancestors who were colonists, but certainly will not be exclusively descended from them. That descent, where it applies, does not mean one thing. Further, though I am not certain of the point at which colonists become natives, I am certain that it happens. I am certain too that the continued use of the terms “colonist” and “native” to refer to two religiously, politically and culturally defined groups in Northern Ireland is at best problematic. I hope I am on my way to achieving sufficient distance from my filiation and affiliation points to bear witness in the way described by Whelan. Invoking that concept and Hewitt’s idea of bearing in mind, I suggest that it should be possible to attest to my position as a Northern Irish Protestant at the same time as attesting to the history and legacy of Protestant plantation and domination in the north of Ireland.

## NOTES

- 1 I came to this title following Audrey Horning's identification of Northern Ireland as the elephant in the room where Irish postcolonialism is concerned; Audrey Horning, "[Cultures of Contact, Cultures of Conflict? Identity Construction, Colonialist Discourse, and the Ethics of Archaeological Practice in Northern Ireland](#)," *Stanford Journal of Archaeology* 5 (2007).
- 2 See <http://www.rethinking-nordic-colonialism.org> for a survey of one of their major projects.
- 3 Kuratorisk Aktion, *Tupilakosaurus: an Incomplete(able) Survey of Pia Arke's Artistic Work and Practice* (Copenhagen: Kuratorisk Aktion, 2012), 8.
- 4 F.C. McGrath, "[Settler Nationalism: Ulster Unionism and Postcolonial Theory](#)," *Irish Studies Review* 20, no. 4 (2012): 463-485, 464.
- 5 Stephen Howe, *Ireland and Empire: Colonial Legacies in Irish History and Culture* (Oxford UK: Oxford University Press, 2000).
- 6 Gerry Kearns, "[Historical Geographies of Ireland: Colonial Contexts and Postcolonial Legacies](#)," *Historical Geography* 41 (2013): 22-34, 23.
- 7 I use the term "Protestant" rather than "unionist" throughout because they do not mean the same thing, and for me, "Protestant" can be an unsolicited identity, while "unionist" refers to a chosen political identity.
- 8 Donna Haraway, *Modest\_Witness@Second\_Millennium.FemaleMan@\_Meets\_OncoMouse™: Feminism and Technoscience* (London: Routledge: 1997), 151.
- 9 James Stevens Curl, *The Londonderry Plantation, 1609-1914: the History, Architecture and Planning of the Estates of the City of London and its Livery Companies in Ulster* (Chichester UK: Phillimore, 1986).
- 10 Curl, *The Honourable the Irish Society and the Plantation of Ulster, 1608-2000: a History and Critique* (Chichester UK: Phillimore, 2000). See also R.J. Hunter, *The Ulster Plantation in Armagh and Cavan, 1608-41* (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 2012).
- 11 A.T.Q. Stewart, *The Narrow Ground: Aspects of Ulster, 1609-1969* (Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 1997), 23.
- 12 Presbyterians too were subject to discrimination in the seventeenth century in particular, but also in the eighteenth century. They were reluctant to acknowledge the monarch as the head of the church, and therefore to take the Oath of Supremacy. For the state, this called their loyalty into question.
- 13 Quoted in Terrence McDonough, "Introduction," in *Was Ireland a Colony? Economics, Politics and Culture in Nineteenth-Century Ireland*, ed. Terrence McDonough (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2005), vii-xiv, xiv.
- 14 Joe Cleary, "'Misplaced Ideas'? Colonialism, Location and Dislocation in Irish Studies", in *Ireland and Postcolonial Theory*, eds. Clare Carroll and Patricia King (Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003), 16-45.
- 15 *Ibid.*, 18.
- 16 Howe, *Ireland and Empire*.
- 17 Cleary, "'Misplaced Ideas'?" 43. See also Denis O'Hearn, "Ireland in the Atlantic Economy," in *Was Ireland a Colony*, ed. McDonough, 3-26; and Virginia Crossman, "Local Government in Nineteenth-Century Ireland," in *Was Ireland a Colony*, ed. McDonough, 102-116 for example.
- 18 Cleary, "'Misplaced Ideas'?" 43.
- 19 Clare Carroll, "Barbarous Slaves and Civil Cannibals: Translating Civility in Early Modern Ireland," in *Ireland and Postcolonial Theory*, eds. Carroll and King, 63-80, 63.



- 20 See chapters in Carroll and King, *Ireland and Postcolonial Theory* and McDonough, *Was Ireland a Colony*.
- 21 Cleary, "'Misplaced Ideas?'" 25.
- 22 Kevin Whelan, "Between Filiation and Affiliation: The Politics of Postcolonial Memory," in *Ireland and Postcolonial Theory*, eds. Carroll and King, 92-108, 97.
- 23 David Lloyd, "After History: Historicism and Irish Postcolonial Studies," in *Ireland and Postcolonial Theory*, eds. Carroll and King, 46-62, 48.
- 24 Howe, *Ireland and Empire*, 140.
- 25 McDonough, "Introduction," viii.
- 26 Whelan, "Between Filiation and Affiliation," 94.
- 27 Terry Eagleton, "Afterword: Ireland and Colonialism." in *Was Ireland a Colony*, ed. McDonough, 326-333, 327.
- 28 Sandra Scham, "Colony or conflict zone?" *Archaeological Dialogues* 13, no. 2 (2006): 205-207, 205.
- 29 Pamela M. Clayton, "Two Kinds of Colony: 'Rebel Ireland' and the 'Imperial Province,'" in *Was Ireland a Colony*, ed. McDonough 235-246, 235.
- 30 Clare Carroll, "Introduction: the Nation and Postcolonial Theory," in *Ireland and Postcolonial Theory*, eds. Carroll and King, 1-15, 8.
- 31 Whelan, "Between Filiation and Affiliation," 94.
- 32 Lorenzo Veracini, "['Settler Colonialism': Career of a Concept](#)," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 41, no. 2 (2013): 313-333, 314.
- 33 *Loc. cit.*
- 34 *Ibid.*: 325.
- 35 Cleary, "Misplaced Ideas?" 32.
- 36 Horning, "[Archaeology, Conflict and Contemporary Identity](#)," *Archaeological Dialogues* 13, no. 2 (2006): 183-200, 188, 187.
- 37 Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (London: Earthscan Publications, 1965), 122.
- 38 Tadhg O'Keeffe, "[Starting as We Mean To Go On: Why We Need a Theoretically Informed Historical Archaeology in Ireland](#)," *Archaeological Dialogues* 13, no. 2 (2006): 206-211, 209.
- 39 Robert Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (London: Routledge: 1995), 4.
- 40 Lloyd, "After History," 51.
- 41 I ask the question in this way in light of the fact that many Northern Irish Catholics feel out of place too—for generations given to understand themselves as second-class citizens in a Protestant statelet, and both claimed and rejected (and misunderstood) by their co-religionists in the Republic of Ireland.
- 42 Quoted in Cathie McKimm, "Introduction," in *Bear in Mind: Stories of the Troubles*, ed. An Crann *The Tree* (Belfast, Lagan Press: 2000), xi.
- 43 Whelan, "Between Filiation and Affiliation," 108.
- 44 Horning, "Cultures of Contact, Cultures of Conflict," 116.
- 45 Matthew Hollow, "[Introducing the Historian to History: Autobiographical Performances in Historical Texts](#)," *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice* 13, no. 1 (2009): 43-52, 43.
- 46 *Ibid.*, 45.
- 47 *Ibid.*, 48.
- 48 *Ibid.*, 51.
- 49 Jaume Aurell, "[Autobiography as Unconventional History: Constructing the Author](#)," *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice* 10, no. 3 (2006): 433-449, 435.

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- 50 Nancy K. Miller, "[But Enough About Me, What Do You Think of My Memoir?](#)" *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 13, no. 2 (2000): 421-436, 421.
- 51 Ibid., 422.
- 52 Ibid., 431.
- 53 Rocío G. Davies, "[Academic Autobiography as Women's History: Jill Ker Conway's \*True North\* and Leila Ahmed's \*A Border Passage\*](#)," *Rethinking History* 13, no. 1 (2009): 109-123, 110.
- 54 Miller, "But enough About Me," 432.
- 55 McGrath, "Settler Nationalism."
- 56 Aurell, "Autobiography as Unconventional History," 439.

# Exhibiting Maritime Histories: Titanic Belfast in the Post-Conflict City

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**ABSTRACT:** The sinking of the *RMS Titanic* in 1912 represents one of the most infamous maritime disasters in the history of shipping. Yet despite it entering the public imagination in the decades after its sinking, until recently it has all but been erased from the collective memory of the people of Belfast, the city in which it was built. In a post-conflict context, however, Belfast has begun to re-imagine the role of the ship in the city's history, most particularly in the re-development of the docklands area and its designation as the Titanic Quarter, and through its landmark project the Titanic Belfast museum. This paper will trace the economic, social, and political context from which the *Titanic* was built, and the role that this played in silencing any very public commemoration of its sinking until after the signing of the Belfast Agreement. The "story" told in the new museum will be analyzed from this perspective and will illustrate how the wounds of the Troubles continue to inform the interpretation of the city's divided past.

One hundred years after the sinking of the *Royal Mail Ship (R.M.S.) Titanic*, the tragedy continues to captivate the imaginations of millions of people around the globe. Since the loss of over 1,500 lives on the ill-fated night on April 15, 1912, when the ship sank on its maiden voyage about 350 miles from the Newfoundland coast, the *Titanic's* stories have almost continually been rehearsed through books, films, documentaries, and museums. Five weeks after the ship went down, Universal Pictures released the first movie about the tragedy, starring the real-life survivor Dorothy Gibson whose affair with the film studio's founder, Jules Brulatour, brought her on the voyage across the Atlantic in the first place.<sup>1</sup> During the Second World War in 1943, Goebbels's commissioned a propaganda film using the sinking of the *Titanic* as a metaphor for Britain's ill-judged sense of its superior seafaring skills and its arrogant pursuit of profit at the expense of safety.<sup>2</sup> Its sole purpose was to portray Britain in a negative light and hence made no pretense towards accuracy. It was the film adaptation of Walter Lord's 1955 classic book *A Night to Remember* that laid the foundation for all future movie representations of the ship's destiny.<sup>3</sup> Released in 1958, this British film proved a huge commercial success and was followed by several other movie versions, including *The Unsinkable Molly Brown*, starring Debbie Reynolds as the lead as one of the ship's most well-known first-class survivors, and James Cameron's 1997 direction of the multiple academy award-winning epic *Titanic*, grossing over \$2 billion worldwide. Moreover, the ship's sinking has generated a huge number of academic as well as popular texts, many published in 2012 to mark its centenary.<sup>4</sup> Its demise on the eve of the First World War in part may explain its longevity in the collective memory of generations after the war, as a cruel foreboding of the slaughter that took place in the trenches two years after its sinking, and as a salutary symbol of the seeming end of a century of human progress.<sup>5</sup>

Today it is through exhibitions and museums that the story of the *Titanic* has become part of an ever-burgeoning heritage industry. RMS Titanic, Inc., a subsidiary of Premier Exhibitions,

Inc., obtained exclusive rights to the artifacts salvaged from the wreck when it was located and excavated in 1985. Visitors can view the spoils of the wreckage at “*Titanic: The Experience*,” beside Disney World in Orlando, Florida and through the multi-venue “*Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition*,” one of whose locations is the Luxor Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas. The twenty-five million people who have paid to see and who have additionally purchased the myriad of replica artifacts sold at the exhibition confirm the popularity and profitability of this exhibition. Florida and Las Vegas may seem geographically remote from the origin, route, or destination of this ship and its passengers, and suggests that heritage production and reception is sometimes only loosely connected to the spatial settings in which the past takes place. But those places more closely connected to the ship’s history have also incorporated its story into their material and heritage landscape. While Southampton, the port from where the ship began its voyage westward, has a modest display of artifacts in its maritime museum, it is Belfast Northern Ireland – the city in which the ship was built – that has recently invested most heavily in preserving the memory of the city’s role in the ship’s construction, through the opening of the Titanic Belfast museum in April 2012 to mark the centenary of its demise. In a ceremony of remembrance held at the City Hall, to unveil a memorial to those who died and as part of wider efforts to demonstrate the shared history of the people of Northern Ireland, Sinn Féin Lord Mayor, Niall O Donnghaile, claimed that it took so long to erect a memorial because the “memory [was] too painful, the loss too personal.”<sup>6</sup> Others have queried such an interpretation, arguing that the collective amnesia surrounding the ship arose from a sense of failure and shame about the city’s Harland and Wolff shipyard that built the vessel and the sectarian geography of employment at the shipyard in the early twentieth century. But in Northern Ireland’s post-conflict context, *R.M.S. Titanic*’s history and the role of Belfast in that narrative has become part of a wider effort to economically regenerate the city and to positively capitalize on the commercial possibilities of heritage and cultural tourism in achieving that end.<sup>7</sup>

The Titanic Belfast museum, forms part of a larger regeneration of the docklands area of the city where the shipyard is located, re-named the Titanic Quarter, and includes hotels, apartments, and a new building that houses the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland [Figure 1]. The site covers 185 acres, formerly part of the Harland and Wolff shipyard, and the re-development proposal was born in the wake of the Good Friday Agreement. It is, of course, part of the wider global effort of selling cities as cultural capital.<sup>8</sup> The rejuvenation of former docklands areas into retail, housing, and leisure spaces, begun initially in projects in Boston, San Francisco, and Baltimore has diffused much more widely across the globe to historic waterfronts, in what Atkinson refers to as “maritime kitsch.”<sup>9</sup> At the cornerstone of the development in Belfast has been the building of the Titanic Belfast museum, located on Queen’s Island, an area of land beside Belfast Lough where Harland and Wolff constructed slipways and graving docks to build the *R.M.S. Titanic* and other ocean-going luxury liners. On this space lies the new museum, whose angular construction appears as a glittering shard of innovative architecture, clad with several thousand three-dimensional, silver-anodized aluminum plates, and projecting five ship prows in its facade jutting towards the sky and built at the exact same height (126 ft.) as the original ship [Figure 2]. The exterior of the building, designed to reflect the past that is displayed inside, simultaneously represents a future aspiration that the city can be reinvigorated as a center of commercial success and that the one hundred million pounds spent on it will do for Belfast what the Guggenheim did for Bilbao.<sup>10</sup> Inside the building, the exhibition, designed over nine interpretive galleries, charts the history of the city from the late nineteenth century--as a hub of industrial activity--in which shipbuilding formed a significant part, to the ship’s design, construction, fit-out, launch, and ultimate sinking. The use of state-of-the-art techniques to convey the story mirrors the narrative that projects Belfast as a hub of innovative engineering and manufacturing one hundred years earlier. As one of the most expensive buildings in Europe, the museum would have to attract 290,000 visitors per year to break even, and while skeptics



have doubted the possibility of achieving this, 650,000 people visited in the first nine months, making it the most visited heritage attraction in Northern Ireland, outstripping other top tourist attractions like the Giant's Causeway and the Ulster Museum.



**Figure 1.** The Titanic Quarter.

The story of the *R.M.S. Titanic* indicates how a particular moment in the past can enter the collective consciousness and become part of the heritage industry in a postcolonial context. From the heavily segregated city in which the ship was built to the myriad of places from where its passengers/staff originated, this maritime disaster has achieved iconic status and it connects to three areas of inquiry that have particularly animated geographers' approach to investigating the uses of the past in the present. First, it alerts us to the relationship between heritage sites and history, and why some episodes from the past are mobilized for popular consumption. Second, the story of the *R.M.S. Titanic* foregrounds the relationship between space, place, and identity making. Geographers have been particularly interested in the connections between heritage preservation and place-based identity politics, and in the context of Northern Ireland, the disputed geographies of national allegiance are especially significant. Finally, for geographers, understanding the symbolic as well as the material effects of heritage landscapes is of significant import in their interpretation of these places. The remainder of this paper will address these issues, beginning with an overview of the evolution of Belfast as an industrial hub in the nineteenth century and its sectarian social and political geographies. This will be followed by a sketch of the ideas underpinning the re-development of the city's docklands as the Titanic Quarter. And finally the story presented at the Titanic Belfast complex will be analyzed, with a view to situating it within a broader discourse of the post-conflict city and the erasure of any conceptions of the city as one with a distinctly colonial legacy. Yet one of the legacies of the Plantation of Ulster was the replacement of populations from England, Wales, and especially Presbyterian Scotland into what



**Figure 2.** Titanic Belfast — the museum.

Kearns refers to as “the half-emptied nest of Gaelic Ireland,” and with that came religious and political divisions that would leave indelible marks on Ulster’s society in general and in Belfast in particular, that remain to the present day.<sup>11</sup>

### **Booming Belfast: The industrial city that built the *Titanic***

The Belfast that built the *R.M.S. Titanic* was developing as an industrial hub throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, but this city’s growth began a hundred years earlier. From a small town with a population of 8,549 in 1757, the city’s inhabitants numbered 386,946 in 1911 on the eve of the completion of the ship, making it, albeit briefly, larger than Dublin. This growth was largely the product of rural migration from the surrounding countryside, as employment opportunities expanded to correspond with the city’s widening industrial base. Its maritime position in part accounted for this growth. Quays in the eighteenth-century city were largely developed to facilitate trade and the city’s merchant class. Hanover Quay, for instance, was erected in 1720 and this brought the city quays to the banks of the River Lagan for the first time. It marked the beginning of a series of quay-building projects that would facilitate the trading of goods between Belfast and ports around the globe. Moreover, accompanying the expansion of docking facilities were efforts to improve direct access to the city along Belfast Lough. Straightening and deepening the channel into the port would offset the need for larger vessels to offload their cargo onto lighters to the city, and precipitated the development of the Ballast Board, responsible for improving access and docking facilities for the town. In 1837, the board, under the Act for the Formation of a New Cut or Channel and for Otherwise Improving More Effectually the Port and Harbour of Belfast, engaged William Dargan, railway engineer and canal builder, to carry out improvements. The first cut was made in 1839 and the spoil was dumped to form Dargan’s Island, later named Queen’s Island, which although initially designated as pleasure grounds, would eventually become a key site for shipbuilding and for the *R.M.S. Titanic* in particular. The Belfast Harbour Commissioners, the new name for the old Ballast Board, undertook a second cut of the channel in 1847, also under the watchful eye of Dargan, and this Victoria Channel provided straight, deep-water access into the city. Land infill provided the developing port with cargo handling areas, new arterial connections to the city, office space for private companies, and the Harbour Commissioners, and a new Custom’s House erected in 1857. Such infrastructural innovations aided the development of the city as a major trading and shipbuilding center.<sup>12</sup>

But it was not on the harbor’s development and the ensuing shipbuilding industry that Belfast’s industrial might alone depended. Before the deepening of channels into the port, the city had already been developing its textile industry and in particular its linen manufacture and trade that would be exported around the globe. Originally Belfast had traded linen produced in the surrounding countryside, particularly County Antrim. The Brown Linen Halls (1754 and 1773) and the White Linen Hall (1785) were established in the eighteenth century to facilitate this trade in bleached linen. Cloth manufacture in the city itself initially involved the spinning and weaving of cotton and it wasn’t until the enterprising Mulholland brothers began experimenting with the weaving of linen in their new mill built in the late 1820s that the city began to focus on linen manufacture. Steam-powered mills (as opposed to the water-powered mills used in manufacturing cotton) and having investigated the latest innovations used in Leeds’ mills, the Mulhollands step towards linen manufacture meant that others followed suit. The twelve linen mills in existence in 1832 had increased to thirty-two by 1860, while only two cotton mills continued to exist. This expansion into the production of textiles enhanced Belfast’s reputation as a “Linenopolis,” and although it experienced the same fluctuation in market demand as other centers of linen production as the century progressed, the production of high-grade linen from the factories in Belfast ensured that it could retain its place in the international linen trade,



particularly across Britain's empire and the Spanish Americas. The improvement of harbor facilities also contributed to its success. With it came other industries, most notably foundries, ironworks, bleachers, printers, and brick makers.<sup>13</sup>

Moreover, some new industries developed in tandem with the textile and shipbuilding industries. For instance, Belfast's Ropeworks produced ropes for the shipyards and became one of the biggest global manufacturers of its kind, while other major concerns like Gallaher's tobacco factory had two thousand employees at its peak, and developed independently of linen or shipbuilding. The industrialization of Belfast also meant the feminization of much of the industrial labor force. Women worked particularly in the linen mills and tobacco factories and by 1901 women formed 38 percent of the work force compared to 29 percent of Ireland as a whole and 30 percent of Britain. In contrast to national trends only 20 percent of these women were domestic servants, while 40 percent were in Britain. According to Connolly and McIntosh, "women formed the backbone of the city's linen industry, in both spinning and weaving sectors, and were also crucial to other manufacturing enterprises such as Gallaher's giant tobacco factory."<sup>14</sup> These major manufacturing enterprises not only brought Belfast in closer contact with Britain, and enhanced east-west links rather than north-south ones, but also brought the city in much closer direct contact with Britain's imperial markets and its overseas colonies.

While the city industrialized, its religious composition also changed. In 1834 31 percent of the city's population was Catholic, and this rose to 34 percent by 1861, as Catholic rural migrants entered the city in search of employment, although by the beginning of the twentieth century Catholic numbers had fallen again to 24 percent. The nineteenth-century French traveler to Ireland Madame de Bovet wrote in her *Three Months' Tour in Ireland*, published in 1891, "Belfast is the battleground of religions, a Protestant stronghold in the midst of Catholic and apostolic Erin and the zeal of both sides is quickened by contact."<sup>15</sup> While sectarian strife may not have been characteristic of this urban settlement from the outset, particularly when the town was overwhelmingly Protestant, from the nineteenth century onward, religious and political antagonism heightened and openly violent exchanges often rotated around rituals like the Orangemen's Twelfth of July parades. In part, these conflicts were reproductions of animosities between Catholic and Protestant rural societies, like the Defenders and Peep-of-Day Boys, carried to Belfast through rural to urban migration.<sup>16</sup> Although Protestants were numerically denominated by the Church of Ireland (Anglicans) and Presbyterians, there were numerous others smaller groups including Methodists, Baptists, Unitarians, and Congregationalists, so that by 1900 there were only nineteen Catholic churches and over two hundred non-Catholic places of worship. As the nationalist movement gathered pace across nineteenth-century Ireland, antagonism and sometimes-intense violence ensued in the microcosm of divided opinion that Belfast represented.<sup>17</sup>

And this found expression in the social geography of the city itself. Residential and, to a lesser but also significant extent, employment segregation characterized the nineteenth century and has continued into the twenty first century. By 1901 more than 60 percent of families lived in streets where at least 90 percent of the occupants shared the same religion. And Catholic areas tended to be more segregated than Protestant ones, reflecting the class composition of each group, where Catholics worked as domestic servants within wealthy Protestant households. As Stephen Royle has observed "segregation might be seen as a cause and an effect of sectarian strife."<sup>18</sup> Moreover street names became bywords for the religious composition of an area: "Mention of Smithfield, Hercules Street or Pound Street (usually just called the Pound) identified Catholics, whilst Sandy Row was synonymous with Protestants."<sup>19</sup> Overlaying the geographies of residential segregation were divisions in employment, both in terms of particular industries but also with respect to religiously based divisions of labor within specific industries or employers. While Catholics were employed in good numbers in the linen industry, they formed a tiny minority of



employees in the city's shipbuilding sector and, in aggregate terms based on the 1901 Census, "were significantly over-represented in unskilled and poorly paid occupations, while the average ratable valuation of Catholic houses was two-thirds that of Protestant dwellings."<sup>20</sup> Such inequalities, fuelled by periodic purges of Catholics from workplaces, for instance, as took place in 1857, served to fuel the fan of political agitation and sectarian division and mapped onto to a wider discourse across Ireland for Catholic emancipation, land reform, and ultimately moved towards political reform that would rescind the Act of Union (1801) and lead to a path of political independence for Ireland.<sup>21</sup> It is within this context that the *R.M.S. Titanic* was built and would fashion how the legacy of its sinking would be publicly forgotten or remembered within the city.

### **Samson and Goliath: Harland and Wolff**

William Dargan had redeveloped the harbor in the 1840s, providing the deep-water Victoria Channel and making the port accessible to even the largest ships of the day. Traffic to the port increased significantly making it the biggest in Ireland, and creating a 30 percent increase in ships coming into the port from mid-century to 1914. Even into the twentieth century, new docks were erected to accommodate this expansion. These included, for instance, Spencer and Dufferin Docks (1872), York Dock (1876), and Thompson Graving Dock (1911). In the early nineteenth century there were a few shipbuilding enterprises constructing wooden vessels, and the first steam-powered ship, the *Belfast*, left the docks in 1820 on its maiden voyage to Liverpool. These early shipbuilding companies were located in the County Antrim side of the River Lagan, but with the improvements of the 1840s, much shipbuilding activity moved to Victoria Island on the Co Down side. A small company, Thompson and Kirwin established premises adjacent to the patent slip on Queen's Island, followed by Edward Hickson, who wished to extend his foundry and expand his business of building iron ships. He employed Edward Harland from Yorkshire, who had been an engineer on the Tyne and the Clyde and had served an apprenticeship with the notable railway magnate Robert Stephenson. Hickson's business floundered and he offered the shipyard to Harland. In 1858 Harland accepted his invitation, bought the original shipyard on Queen's Island, and extended it by acquiring more land so that the entire enterprise covered 1.4 hectares. And so was born the Edward James Harland and Company shipbuilding firm. He recruited staff from the Tyne shipyards in Newcastle as well as employing the nephew of his friend, the Liverpool ship-owner Gustav Schwabe, Gustav Wolff as his assistant. Within three years, Wolff was elevated to partner in the firm and the company was renamed Harland and Wolff.<sup>22</sup>

From the outset, they specialized in building passenger ships, particularly for the White Star Line shipping company, to coincide with the onset of mass migration especially from Europe to North America. The Harbour Commissioners were also further expanding harbor facilities on the Queen's Island side of the river, opening the Abercorn Basin and Hamilton Graving Dock, both close to Harland and Wolff's premises in 1867. The success of the company continued and by 1870 there were 2,400 men employed in the shipyard. The company continued to expand their works, building new berthing and graving docks gantries to hasten production and re-equipped engine and boiler works. They also hired William Pirrie as chief draughtsman and he became a partner in 1874. Harland died in 1895, an occasion that was marked by a huge funeral in Belfast, and Pirrie took over the Chairmanship of the company. By 1899 the shipyard had built the world's largest ship, the *Oceanic*.<sup>23</sup> This was followed by the erection of the new Thompson Graving Dock in 1911, from where the *Olympic* and the *Titanic* were built, each marking a watershed for being the world's largest ships ever built. The workforce had expanded to around fourteen thousand employees, mainly men and primarily Protestant. And it was from this yard in 1912 that the world's most infamous ocean liner departed. This overview provides the historical framework

from which we can interpret the “story” of the city presented at the Titanic Belfast museum. While the museum’s principal focus is on the making of the ship itself, this cannot be readily separated from the deeper context that made Belfast the heartland of heavy industry in Ireland in the latter decades of the nineteenth century and a hub for shipbuilding. The museum’s account is inflected by this narrative, albeit it selectively.

### **Titanic Quarter and the re-making of Belfast’s Maritime Heritage**

Since the 1970s with the decline of traditional heavy industries, particularly shipbuilding and its associated trades, in the urban centers of the West, developers, city planners, and in some instances conservationists, have seen these spaces as potential nodes for regeneration and gentrification. Derelict dockland areas have been transformed into leisure, retail, and residential areas and, in some instances, centers for new service industries.<sup>24</sup> Early examples in San Francisco and Boston illustrated the potential for these dockland locales to be transformed and revitalized areas of the city, offering waterside vistas, historic building fabric, and a post-industrial chic that would appeal to both to incoming residents and tourists.<sup>25</sup> The success of these early examples prompted other cities to follow suit, in what is sometimes referred to as a “waterfront Renaissance,” and created what some commentators consider a uniform aesthetic of bland consumption.<sup>26</sup>

From the context of a very successful shipbuilding company on the eve of the First World War with the introduction of the Third Home Rule Bill in the House of Commons in April 1912 and an Ulster characterized by heightened political tensions about the constitutional question (leading to the signing of the Ulster Covenant in September 1912), the *R.M.S. Titanic* left Belfast on its maiden voyage. In the intervening decades in Northern Ireland and up until the 1980s, according to John Wilson Foster, the ship had been all but erased from public memory, “given the fact that Harland and Wolff was the biggest single shipyard in the world for some decades, and at the leading edge of passenger ship development and design, very little has been done, even with the major figures involved, let alone the culture they both embodied and inhabited.”<sup>27</sup> A variety of explanations have been offered for this absence, erasure, or omission about the city and shipyard from where the famous ship emanated. Some suggest that Harland and Wolff itself sought to avoid too much additional publicity about the shipyard in the wake of the disaster and thus positively discouraged histories of the company being written. Others claim that the ship’s sinking was a badge of shame for Belfast’s predominantly (but not exclusively) Protestant shipbuilding workforce and consequently silenced the ship’s memory locally. Some also assert that although Catholics might have secretly, at the time, regarded the disaster as a well-deserved punishment for the city’s maritime industries and thus dismissed it, in a post-partition context they increasingly came to see the shipyards in general, and Harland and Wolff in particular, as representations of the sectarian character of employment practices in the industry and one of the sources of their discontent. There is some merit in all these perspectives and the political context of the decade immediately after the ship’s sinking, ultimately resulting in Ireland’s partition in 1921, all eclipsed the significance of *R.M.S. Titanic*’s demise in public’s consciousness.<sup>28</sup> Everybody wanted to forget about the sinking of this ship.

In the late 1990s however, after the signing of the Belfast Agreement, the Titanic Quarter project was conceived. In part facilitated by the declining shipbuilding company’s desire to make profit through land development, Harland and Wolff sold some of its land. The lead purchaser in the transaction with responsibility for development of the Titanic Quarter was the Dublin-based development company, Harcourt Developments. The concept architect appointed was the Texas-born Eric Kuhne who was best known for his company’s development of the Bluewater shopping center in Kent, England. The Northern Ireland Executive, Belfast City Council, and the Northern Irish Tourist Board supported the Belfast project. Phase one of the project, titled “The

Arc” began in 2007 and involved the building, through private financing, of over four hundred seafront apartments, a hotel, and offices near the city’s entertainment venue, the Odyssey arena. Corresponding, however, with the beginning of a substantial global and local downturn in the economy, government-injected support was required to keep the project on track and thus the Public Record Office Northern Ireland and the Belfast Metropolitan College were both relocated to the area, with the state financing the leasing of the buildings from Harcourt Developments for the next thirty years (Figure 3). The second phase of the development received outline planning permission in 2007 and final permission in 2009, for a proposal that included the building of more apartments, shops, restaurants, and offices. Moreover, to mark the then-upcoming centenary, Titanic Belfast (or the Titanic Signature Project as it was called then) formed the epicenter of the plan.<sup>29</sup>



**Figure 3.** Public Record Office of Northern Ireland located in the Titanic Quarter.

Wherever the explanation lies for the collective erasure of the *Titanic's* history in the city of its birth, the rejuvenation of the memory of the ship's homeport has become part of the wider post-conflict "peace" dividend. For some "the simplistic narrative of the 'Titanic story' being promulgated by development interests rides roughshod over the more sensitive and profound cultural imagination which *Titanic* should evoke in the city of its birth."<sup>30</sup> This, it is claimed, accentuates the myth of the *Titanic* by de-coupling its history from debates about the safety provisions on the liner built by Harland and Wolff, ignoring the general hostility of the company's management and owners to the Irish independence movement, and overlooking the fact that the small number of Catholics employed in the shipyard periodically faced sectarianism in the workplace.<sup>31</sup> Examining the promotional literature of those responsible for developing the Titanic Quarter, Etchart concludes that the language of "neutrality" which pervades this policy "can stir the feeling of alienation and marginalization among the local communities."<sup>32</sup> While others, who have observed the broader efforts at normalization projects within the city claim "the geopolitical fault lines of the city are drawn ever tighter today than they were when I was growing up in the upper north side of the city in the 1950s."<sup>33</sup> Moreover, the creation of a brand new building on Queen's Island has attracted criticism because one of the few remaining original structures associated with the building of the ship, the company's drawing offices, have lain derelict. As Neill observes, "Acting as spatial aides to more mature personal and collective reflection and memory work, the Drawing Offices [of Harland and Wolff] in their forlornness, decay and neglect on the eve of the centenary of the *Titanic* disaster still bore visible and authentic witness to past events."<sup>34</sup> While there are some plans to convert the offices into a themed five-star *Titanic* hotel which would involve radically altering the building's interior, it is certainly unfortunate that the planners, government, and private capital did not see the potential of restoring the Drawing Offices and opening them to the public as a museum space that would highlight the conditions under which the ship's design was conceived, planned and executed. However, let's now turn to examine how the new *Titanic* Belfast tells the story of the city's infamous ship.

### **Not dark tourism: *Titanic* Belfast**

*Titanic* Belfast, it is claimed, is designed as a visitor experience rather than as a museum per se, and while the two are certainly not mutually exclusive kinds of space, a focus on experience and the manner in which the space is organized encourages the viewer to take a chronological "journey" through the exhibit where a linear narrative of events is portrayed and communicated.<sup>35</sup> While the building encompasses a total area of 10,000 m<sup>2</sup>, the exhibition galleries themselves cover around 2,500 m<sup>2</sup>, about a quarter of space available, while retail, catering, temporary exhibition, conference space, corporate entertaining, and education/community spaces use the remaining square footage (Figure 4). The exhibition is spread across nine galleries and over three floors, and it spans more than one hundred years, although the main focus of the display centers on the period from the 1890s to the 1910s. Rather than using material artifacts from this period of Belfast's industrial history, this experience-centered museum conveys its story mainly through photographs, film footage, narration, text, reconstructions, music, and the very occasional original artifact. Some authors claim that this approach to museum practice replicates "the current turn away from ideas that particularize objects as the primary element to convey information towards more experience-orientated thinking... The contemporary museum, with its focus on the primacy of performance, sometimes finds itself in danger of adopting manipulative strategies."<sup>36</sup> However, all museums involve processes of selection and interpretation, even those more overtly centered on the display of "authentic" objects and artifacts. Unlike some of the tours provided by black cab operators in the city that bring visitors along the zones of separation and the "peace walls" that separate Catholics and Protestants in certain neighborhoods in the city, the museum is not



attempting to project a “dark tourism” experience.<sup>37</sup> In that sense the museum stands apart from the political tensions that gripped the city during the “Troubles” and continue to reverberate in the post-conflict environment.

The first gallery of the museum, “Boomtown Belfast,” charts the industrial base underpinning the city’s economic success from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. Using projected images including maps and photographs; soundscapes including oral testimony; a few original artifacts; and lots of text, the viewer is introduced to the social and industrial context of the shipbuilding city. Its major industries and their factories--the linen mills, the Sirocco factory, rope making--are presented in an atmosphere that attempts to convey something of the bustle of the busy, industrial city. From the scale of the city, one then moves metaphorically into the Harland and Wolff shipyard itself, some of the original gates to the premises are used, [Figure 5] and into its drawing office, where some of the key players in the shipyard’s staff are introduced. These include Thomas Andrews, the *Titanic*’s designer; Lord Pirrie, the Company Chairman; John Arthurs, a Harland and Wolff cabinet maker; Bruce Ismay, the White Star Line Chairman; and Mary Sloan as one of White Star Line’s stewardesses on board the *Titanic*. Early drawings of the ship are presented. Overall, some flavor of the social composition of industrial Belfast is conveyed, including the numbers of women employed in the linen factories and samples of wage scales of workers employed in industrial labor in general. This section of the museum connects most directly with the history of the industrialization of Belfast highlighted earlier. A time series



**Figure 4.** Entrance to Titanic Belfast.

of Belfast maps illustrates the city's geographical expansion as its economic base deepens. Moreover, a map of the British Empire with a voice-over commenting on its extent and global influence gestures towards the wider context in which Belfast operated at the height of Britain's overseas empire. Although this links to some of the reasons why shipbuilding and ancillary industries were so successful in Belfast in the second half of the nineteenth century, what is not addressed is the complexity of the city's and Ireland's relationship with that empire.<sup>38</sup> Acknowledging that not all the city's citizens were supporters of the empire or that some saw themselves as existing in a colonial relationship with Britain would have added nuance to the presentation. Thus, while this opening gallery does communicate a sense of a bustling and energetic industrial city and echoes some merits of industrial and popular museums, it does little to translate much about the religious divisions within the city more broadly or within the shipbuilding industry in particular.<sup>39</sup> To that extent, the narrative is generally de-politicized.

The second gallery, "The Shipyard," is focused more directly on the literal nuts and bolts entailed in building a major liner in the second decade of the twentieth century. A scaffolding to replicate a third of the height of the Arrol Gantry, built specifically to aid the construction of the *Olympic* and the *Titanic*, gives something of the scale of the operation. The visitor can then take a "ride" through a re-creation of the ship's hull to try to envisage and imagine the work involved in building the ship. The labor-intensive and grueling nature of the working conditions is conveyed through an explanation and display of the process of riveting. Moreover, this part of the tour is



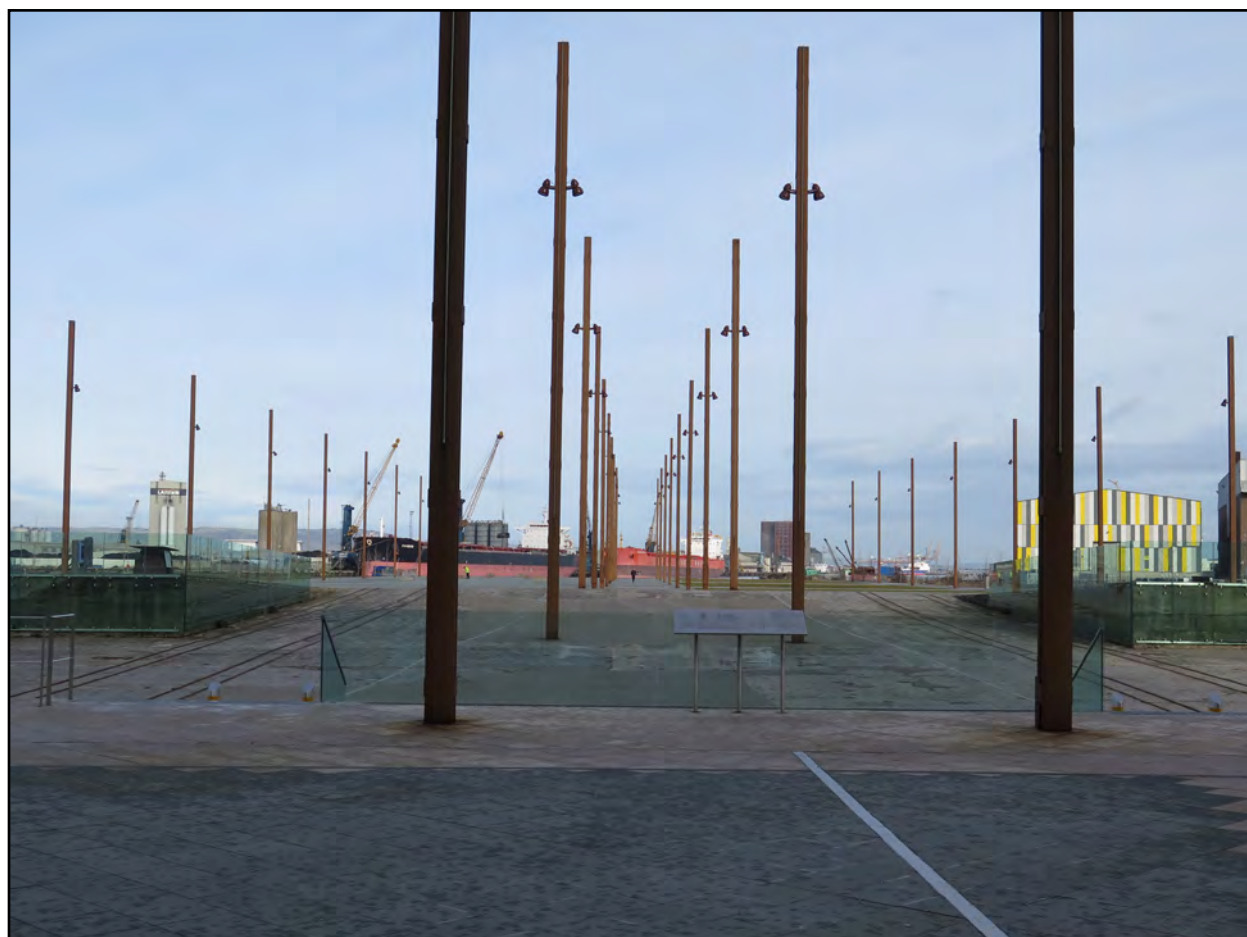
**Figure 5.** Entrance gates to Harland and Wolff shipyard.



also a soundscape, reproducing the endless clanging of hundreds of hammers constantly hitting iron and the negative effect this had on the workers' hearing. This section of the gallery attempts to immerse the visitor into the intimate environment of building a major ship and the day-to-day working conditions of the labor force involved.

The third gallery, "The Launch," portrays the spring day in May 1911 when the *Titanic* was launched into Belfast Lough, a scene witnessed by one hundred thousand spectators. This part of the museum brings the exterior landscape of Belfast's docklands into the gallery, as a large picture window enables the visitor to view Slipway No. 3 directly from where the ship was released. It also offers a panorama of the current docks and slipways as ships move up and down the channel. Although the city no longer builds any ships, the view does convey the continuing role of the port in the larger Belfast economy and allows the viewer to witness the redevelopment taking place here in the twenty-first century.<sup>40</sup>

The fourth gallery, "The Fit-Out," documents the interior fitting out of the ship. The processes involved in making the ship suitable for voyage are highlighted from the heavy engineering of boiler room and engine fitting, to the trades involved in the interior design of the ship's private and public rooms. This section of the museum, again, connects shipbuilding in Belfast to the other industries in the city and in so doing broadens the narrative from the specifics of the *Titanic* to the wider economic context. From the cabinet makers designing the furniture to the textile workers and seamstresses providing the linen for the ship, the viewer is aided in



**Figure 6.** Titanic Launch – Slipway No. 3.

appreciating that there were many hands involved in the making of the *Titanic* and its economic significance seeped into many different sectors of the city's economy. Over three thousand tradesmen and women were employed in the fit-out process that was completed in under a year. This gallery also contains one-to-one reconstructions of First-, Second- and Third-class cabins, which allow the viewer to observe how the different social classes were accommodated. The display offers both an insight into the quality of the fittings in each class but also the surprising "luxury" of the cabins even for Third Class passengers. There is also a scaled model of the ship as well as a 3-D display that allows a virtual tour from the ship's boiler room to the Captain's bridge. This section of the tour is more intimate in scale, although lots of the photographs used to illustrate the interior decoration are drawn from other White Star liners, rather than the *Titanic* itself. This part of the tour is also more feminine in focus, emphasizing the luxury travel that the White Star Line sought to provide, and how this was translated through its interior design. What this section fails to pay attention to were the safety features deployed in the ship's layout and provisioning. And this type of omission contributes to some of the mythology surrounding the ship's preparedness for any potential accidents.<sup>41</sup>

Gallery five, "The Maiden Voyage," creates a celebratory atmosphere as the ship leaves Belfast and staff/passengers board in Southampton. If the previous gallery focused on the huge task of fitting out the ship to the standards demanded by the White Star Line, this gallery outlines how the ship was provisioned and the quantities of food and beverages taken on board, for instance forty thousand eggs and eight thousand cigars. The class contrasts between different types of passengers are highlighted and one can glean a sense of how the social hierarchies of the ship operated at the micro-scale. Food and supplies provisioning become representations for the class divisions on the ship and serve a symbolic role for the visitor. The photographic images taken by the Irish Jesuit priest, Fr. Frank Browne, who boarded at Southampton and disembarked at Cobh (Queenstown), provide a rich visual record of everyday life on the ship, and the archive of these images has supplied source material for many books and other interpretations of the *Titanic's* story.<sup>42</sup> This section of the museum is upbeat in tone and provides no hint of the impending doom.

"The Sinking," the theme of gallery six, is evoked through a staging of affect that challenges senses other than the visual. A change in light conditions and a lowering of temperature in the gallery, accompanied by a soundscape, presages the ship's sinking. If Gibson's observation that tourism researchers "are now analyzing the other senses and how encounters are experienced in an affective, embodied fashion," is true, it's also the case that museum designers are trying to engage the visitor at a multisensory level.<sup>43</sup> The ship's log lists are reproduced, including weather forecasts, ice warnings, and the Morse SOS messages sent to other ships as the *Titanic* began to falter. There are also audio clips of survivors' oral history of their experience and images of the press reports that surfaced in the immediate aftermath of the tragedy. This montage demonstrates how news was transmitted and the divergent nature of the representation of the ship's sinking in the media's haste to get their reports out into the public sphere. The ship's final sinking is depicted through the use of four hundred life jackets projected onto an image of the ship.

Gallery seven is devoted to "The Aftermath." Two key themes anchor the story in this gallery. Firstly, the two public inquiries into the disaster (one in the US and the other in UK) are portrayed through text panels, voiceovers, and visual evidence, demonstrating the immediate controversy surrounding interpretation of what happened and why the ship sank. Straddled between the representation of the inquiries is a full-size replica of one of *Titanic's* life boats, perhaps suggesting to the reader that the absence of a sufficient number of lifeboats on the ship lay at the heart of the casualty lists produced by the accident. Secondly, there is an online database provided where the visitor can investigate the statistics related to the disaster by searching the passenger list. This is calibrated by gender, age, nationality, port of embarkation, occupation,



and class of travel. This database provides the visitor with a wealth of interesting information about the profile of the passengers and the survival rates of different groups. It is interactive and enables the visitor to make decisions about the type of information they seek to retrieve.

The penultimate gallery, "Myths and Legends," charts how the *Titanic's* demise has entered the public's imagination through fiction, film, poetry, and drama, and allows the public to explore how some myths about the ship have been portrayed and cultivated. The final section of the museum is devoted to the Titanic Beneath, which opens with an introduction to Professor Robert Ballard, the oceanographer and explorer who discovered the ship's wreck in 1985. In a projection theatre with screens 12 m by 9 m, visitors can observe the sunken ship based on the thousands of photographs taken by Ballard and his team during their investigation. The final two galleries are more centered on the ship's afterlife and its role in contemporary academic and fictional studies, and are consequently more removed from the city in which the ship was built.

### **Post-conflict and post-colonial legacies**

The development of the Titanic Quarter in Belfast replicates many of the dockside regeneration projects practiced in port cities across the globe. To that extent, it mirrors some of the same design principles and evocations of a maritime past that literally anchor such waterfront renaissance projects. Historical geographers, sociologists, and planning experts have highlighted some of the shortcomings of such urban projects, particularly in relation to their effect on dockside communities and the history they seek to project. A number of characteristics differentiate Belfast from some of these other quayside developments, however. First, the redevelopment of Belfast's port area hinges on a historical reimagining of a maritime disaster that quickly entered the public's imagination and popular mythology as the most significant ship's sinking in history. Tying the city's shipbuilding past and economic future so closely with what many would consider a failed venture is both ironic and brave. Second, the erasure of the memory of the *Titanic* from the public sphere in Belfast until at least the 1980s reinforces the extent to which this episode in the city's history is so closely tied to the political consequences of nineteenth-century conflict about Home Rule, partition in 1921, and the subsequent Troubles in Northern Ireland. For Protestants and Catholics in the city, the sinking of the *Titanic* represented much more than an engineering failure or an unlucky collision with a North Atlantic iceberg, and thus, albeit for different reasons, memorializing the *Titanic* was neglected. Third, the development of consociational political arrangements under the terms of the Belfast Agreement provided the preconditions to conceive of using the *Titanic's* history as a cornerstone for promoting reconciliation through the regeneration of the docklands. And this is embodied in Titanic Belfast. While the museum shares many of the features of contemporary approaches to museum design, two aspects of the story relayed are worth noting, even in a post-conflict context. At the macro-level although the museum effectively focuses on the wider industrial context of the city from which Harland and Wolff would emerge, the political and cultural framework are too hidden beneath the surface. The links between the industrialization of Belfast, its own colonial history, and its deep connections with Britain's empire could have been highlighted in ways which would have enriched the story and added to its complexity. To ignore the fact that nineteenth-century Belfast was a heavily segregated city, where nationalist and unionist voices came into verbal and at times physical conflict, and where differences over the "national question" often supplanted other points of unity, especially among the city's working class, is an opportunity missed. Like many other post-conflict societies, there is a fine balancing act to be performed between remembering and forgetting in an effort to circumvent any widespread return to violence.<sup>44</sup> In Sierra Leone, for instance, the erasure of Indigenous histories from heritage preservation policies may undermine the fragile peace, while Winter warns in the context of Cambodia that "heritage and tourism risk

Cambodia once again trapping itself in a mono-cultural, mono-ethnic, nationalism.”<sup>45</sup> The story of the *Titanic*, therefore, could have been more critically tackled precisely because it has the potential to embody some of the deep-seated differences of view and experience that have undergirded the conflict, yet not directly resurrect memories of violence between unionist and nationalist. In that sense the museum might have taken the “long view” and treated Belfast’s industrial past as part of a wider debate about its status as kingdom or colony. And at the micro-level of particular industries (especially shipbuilding, and Harland and Wolff in particular) the religious composition of the workforce, sectarianism within the workplace, and political activism among the employees, as well as employers, could have been more explicitly embraced in the narrative that the museum projected. Acknowledging some of the divisive practices at the shipyards and the ideologies underpinning them by those working and living in the docklands at the time of the *Titanic*’s construction could have opened up the conversation and contributed to the dialogue about how the past is dealt within a post-conflict society. The wounds of the Troubles have not been obliterated from the Belfast landscape since the signing of the Belfast Agreement, and the story of the *Titanic* could have been mobilized more explicitly as a vehicle through which highly contested versions of the past could be addressed by the people living and working in the ship’s birthplace.

## NOTES

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- 2 Werner Klingler and Herbert Selpin, dirs., *Titanic* (Germany: UFA, 1943).
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# West Coast Booms and East Coast Busts: Methamphetamine Commodity Chains of the 1970s and 1980s

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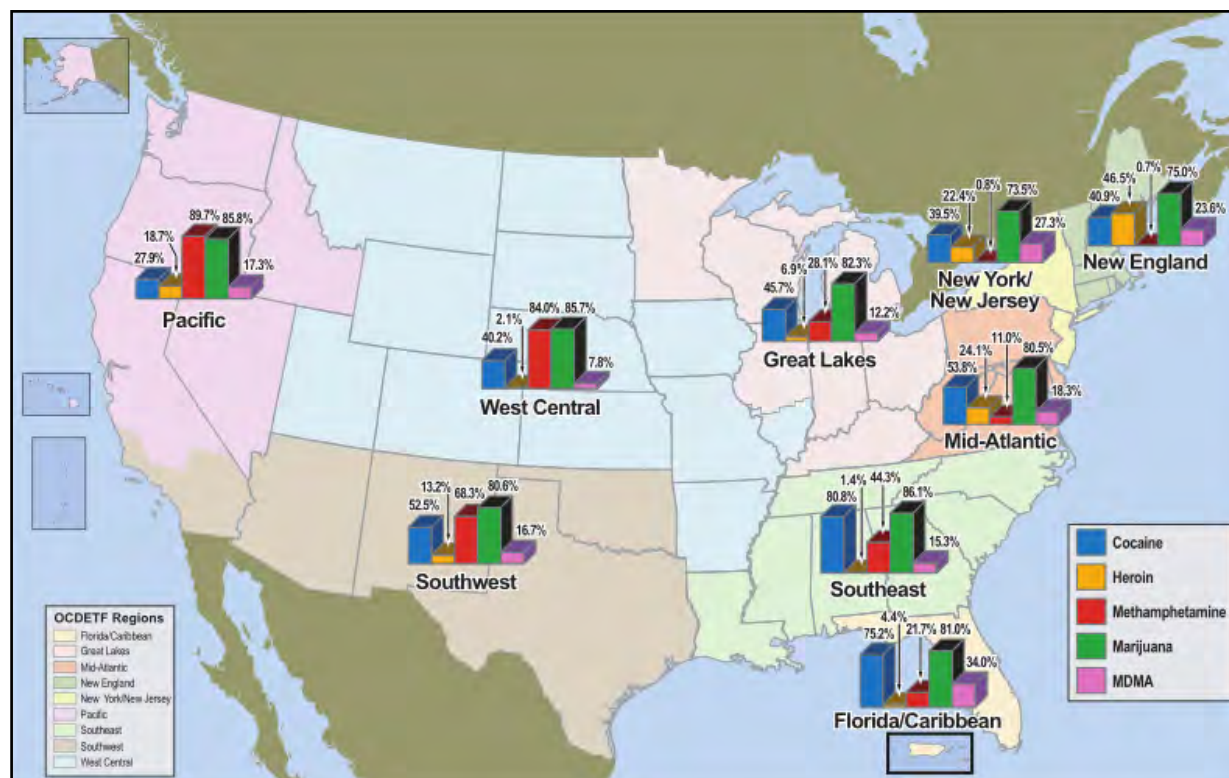
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**ABSTRACT:** This article attempts to explain the peculiar western distribution of methamphetamine production and distribution from a commodity network perspective. The author finds that the drug's western bias dates back to the regulation of a particular precursor, phenyl-2-propanone, in 1981. In reaction to that regulation, producers on the West Coast developed a new method of producing the drug, which resulted in a boom in both production and consumption in that region. East Coast networks, on the other hand, partnered with traditional organized crime to smuggle the precursor into the country. This resulted in increased persecution from police agencies, and the eventual dismantling of East Coast methamphetamine networks.

In 2003 at the height of the national methamphetamine epidemic, Rogelio Guevara, the chief of operations for the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), was called to testify before Congress regarding the perceived boom in the drug's availability. Law enforcement officials had shut down 9,324 clandestine methamphetamine labs nationwide in 2002, and by the end of the year in which Guevara was testifying, that total would be 10,332.<sup>1</sup> Although methamphetamine, or meth as it is often called, was certainly in the public consciousness, its presence was not evenly dispersed across the country.<sup>2</sup> In fact, the distribution of methamphetamine labs reflected what an expert from the Office of National Drug Control Policy called a distinct "lack of uniformity."<sup>3</sup>

The other major problem drugs in the United States—marijuana, cocaine, and heroin—might show some variation in availability by region, but that variation is negligible compared to the one exhibited by methamphetamine. A map of drug availability from the *National Drug Threat Assessment: 2003* reflects the truth in this observation (Figure 1).<sup>4</sup> Methamphetamine was readily available west of the Mississippi, but largely absent from the rest of the country. In fact, 77.8 percent of methamphetamine labs seized in the country between 2000 and 2003 were found in the West Central, Pacific, and Southwest regions designated by the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Taskforce Regions.<sup>5</sup> However, when DEA Chief Guevara was asked to explain why meth markets were so disproportionately encountered in the American West, he could not.<sup>6</sup>

The western concentration of methamphetamine in 2003, and to a lesser extent today, is confounding on a number of levels. In the mid-twentieth century, the drug was available in numerous over-the-counter and prescription preparations throughout the United States.<sup>7</sup> Every part of the country had the opportunity to develop a taste for the stimulant. In fact, methamphetamine was made a schedule II substance in 1971 precisely due to its being what an editorial in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* described as "perhaps the most serious drug of abuse in the United States."<sup>8</sup> Data from the Client-Oriented Data Acquisition Program also showed that amphetamine abuse in the 1970s was a nationally dispersed phenomenon, with no region exhibiting a more significant predilection for abuse than any other.<sup>9</sup>



**Figure 1.** Drug availability by Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force region.<sup>10</sup>

Secondly, if demand was established everywhere, there is little apparent reason for there to have been a lack of supply anywhere in the country. As a synthetic drug, meth can, theoretically, be made anywhere. Meth labs have been found in houses, hotel rooms, trailers, car trunks, Igloo coolers, back packs, and even soda bottles. The list of possible locations for production is almost limitless. And yet, by 2003, a phenomenon (methamphetamine abuse) that was at one point national in scale, had become strongly regionalized. Clandestine production showed a similar distribution.

This article seeks to explain the processes behind the transition from national to regional phenomenon through a historical analysis of methamphetamine commodity chains. Though rarely presented in this manner, most of the illicit drugs consumed in the United States are commodities, produced and distributed for profit like any licit good, though oftentimes by members of society who have been deprived of access to other economic outlets.<sup>11</sup> Gootenberg (2009) has summarized how illicit drugs operate as commodities through an explanation of the heroin trade:

The again booming heroin trade can be seen as comprised of shifting patterns of supply and demand, profit-seeking and risk-taking entrepreneurs, rationalized labor and flexible-production schedules, extensive networks of middlemen and retailers, transport and outsourcing dilemmas, product testing and product substitution, all under crunching global competition.<sup>12</sup>

Economic geographers have long used commodity chain analyses. In an early explanation of the technique, Gereffi et al. (1994) described how following a commodity through each sequential stage of its life from raw material to consumed good could show “how production,

distribution, and consumption are shaped by the social relations (including organizations) that characterize the sequential stages of input acquisition, manufacturing, distribution, marketing, and consumption.”<sup>13</sup> More recently, geographers have begun to emphasize not just the actions of producers and consumers, but also those of regulators whose decisions can create dramatic changes in the institutional context within which firms operate, causing them to relocate both production and sourcing.<sup>14</sup>

Few geographers have studied drugs at all, and very few have approached them from the commodity chain perspective.<sup>15</sup> Wilson and Zambrano (1994) produced the most significant study of a single drug, analyzing the chains involved in the production and distribution of cocaine.<sup>16</sup> In doing so, they were able to demonstrate the manner in which legitimate chemical businesses in the United States were implicated in the trade of cocaine through selling the chemicals that were essential to the processing of coca leaves.

Since that seminal work, few geographers have taken up the gauntlet of drug chain analysis. There have been geographical studies of drug markets and studies of the beginning of the chains related to organically based drugs, but no one has undertaken a study of a chain in its entirety since Wilson and Zambrano.<sup>17</sup> Geographic analyses of methamphetamine have rarely, if ever, taken a historical perspective, and have generally fallen into the category of statistical analyses of lab seizures.<sup>18</sup>

This article applies the commodity chain perspective to methamphetamine networks operating in the United States in the 1970s and 1980s. The commodity chains associated with methamphetamine are different from those of organically based drugs. Whereas cocaine is derived from the coca leaf and heroin from the poppy, methamphetamine is produced in clandestine laboratories without the need for organic ingredients. Its production, rather than relying on particular environmental requirements, is dependent on a series of chemicals, the most important of which are termed precursors, and are incorporated into the final product’s molecular structure as a result of the production process.<sup>19</sup> For the last three decades, federal and state governments have attempted to disrupt illegal methamphetamine chains by limiting access to these precursor chemicals.

Tracing the commodity chains associated with illicit drugs can be a difficult process. Even licit firms often seek to obfuscate the chains associated with their products. Fortunately, the chains that form around drugs are easier to trace from a historical perspective, after they have been made visible through newspaper reporting, police action, and court cases. In the case of methamphetamine, the chains often become visible at the moment of attempted precursor acquisition, and it is possible to retrace them outward from those flashes of visibility.<sup>20</sup>

In analyzing the actions of actors in the commodity chains that formed around methamphetamine after it was made a controlled substance in 1971, I demonstrate that the peculiar geography of methamphetamine is a byproduct of decisions made by key actors in the drug’s commodity chain in response to dramatic changes in the regulatory environment within which they operated. Methamphetamine markets in the 1980s thrived in regions in which key actors in the chain were able to adapt to new regulations, and withered in those regions where criminal operatives were unable to overcome path dependency in their chain. Their success or failure laid the groundwork for the peculiar geography of methamphetamine that continues to this day. The findings demonstrate the explanatory efficacy of commodity chain analysis in historical investigations of the illicit economy, and explain the roots of methamphetamine’s peculiar distribution.

## Methamphetamine in the 1970s

In May of 1971 in response to rising indicators of abuse, all members of the amphetamine family of drugs, including methamphetamine, were made schedule II substances. At the time of their scheduling, methamphetamine-based products were available in a dizzying array of preparations from liquid ampoules for home injection to pills and inhalers, and were marketed for a myriad of illnesses ranging from depression to narcolepsy.<sup>21</sup>

As a schedule II substance, the indications for which meth could be prescribed were severely limited, and all prescriptions for the drug were made non-renewable. The drug's licit commodity chain also became highly regulated, with the government limiting the number of firms that could produce it, and establishing strict production quotas. By 1973 legal methamphetamine production was reduced to 373 kilograms, a 90 percent reduction from the peak year of 1970.<sup>22</sup> Prior to the scheduling, it was estimated that 92 percent of all amphetamines abused nationwide had been legally produced and then diverted to the black market, so such reductions were significant to both licit and illicit markets.<sup>23</sup>

The effect of the new scheduling was to virtually eliminate the availability of legally produced amphetamines for black market diversion. The impact on the drug's illicit market was dramatic, particularly because illicit methamphetamine producers did not immediately swoop in to fill the void left by the government's crackdown on amphetamines. In 1975, only eleven meth labs were seized by the DEA nationwide. Without new producers entering the market, street quality quickly declined. By 1973, after the extant supply of already diverted pills and ampoules had been consumed, the percentage of drugs sold as amphetamines on the street that actually contained them dropped significantly, to the point that, between 1975 and 1977 the average purity of amphetamine purchased on the street was fifteen percent. Many of the speed injectors in former epicenters of abuse moved on to other drugs, particularly heroin and barbiturates. The Speed Kills campaign had also tarnished meth's reputation among drug users so that fewer individuals were trying it for the first time. In short, it was a drug in decline.<sup>24</sup>

Because of the dearth of methamphetamine on the street, the market price of the drug increased tenfold between 1965 and 1975. This rise in price served as an incentive for more individuals to enter the market, and as the decade of the 1970s wore on, the number of labs seized began to climb steadily. By 1979 the total number of lab seizures had risen to 137, a 1,200 percent increase from 1975.<sup>25</sup>

The networks behind the rising number of methamphetamine labs in the 1970s varied significantly in their levels of sophistication and organization. Some were individuals and small groups who took up methamphetamine manufacture as a way to support their own habit or make a quick profit. In some parts of the country, traditional organized crime became involved in the chain. However, the dominant organization type, or chain driver, for the drug in the 1970s and 1980s was the outlaw motorcycle gang (OMG).<sup>26</sup> In fact, one of the drug's street names, "crank," purportedly comes from its frequently being hidden for shipment in the crankcases of the Harley Davidsons that gang members rode.

Most prominent among the motorcycle gangs involved in methamphetamine production and distribution were the four major motorcycle gangs operating at the time—the Pagans, Outlaws, Bandidos, and Hell's Angels. With regionalized networks of chapters, hierarchical governance structures, and a propensity towards crime and secrecy, OMGs were an ideal system of organization for the distribution of drugs.<sup>27</sup> They combined corporate efficiency with higher levels of loyalty than one might expect in a large drug-trafficking organization. Furthermore, the mobility of OMGs, their very *raison d'être*, made them nearly impossible to police because their activities fell within no single jurisdiction. As Gil Amoroso, a DEA agent in Philadelphia,



explained: "They have no boundaries. It's nothing for them to get on a motorcycle, a car, a van, and drive to Florida at the spur of a moment, whereas your local officials can't go outside their jurisdictional boundaries."<sup>28</sup>

Meth distribution was a natural choice for the gangs. First, it was already popular among club members. Second, its price per ounce made it profitable even in small amounts, and increased its transferability. A member of the Bandidos explained the importance in less sophisticated terms: "Everything in the whole club revolves around crank. You can't ride a \$10,000 motorcycle, have a big gun collection, and take care of three 19-year-old ladies working in no body shop."<sup>29</sup>

In 1980, federal officials estimated that OMGs controlled fifty percent of the methamphetamine trade nationwide.<sup>30</sup> However, the ways they engaged the market differed by gang and region. On the West Coast, where little traditional organized crime existed, the Hell's Angels appear to have controlled a large portion of the industry at every level of the chain, from material acquisition through production to distribution.<sup>31</sup> On the East Coast, the Pagans were forced to operate in cooperation with traditional organized crime around New York and Philadelphia, primarily providing muscle and handling distribution.

No matter who was making it, the methamphetamine production process in the 1970s used the chemical phenyl-2-propanone, or P2P, in combination with methylamine, as its primary precursor. P2P methamphetamine production methods produce what is called "racemic methamphetamine."<sup>32</sup> Methamphetamine is a chiral compound, meaning it has symmetrical isomers. These isomers are referred to as levorotatory (l) and dextrorotatory (d) methamphetamine.

The two molecules behave in different ways. The levorotary-methamphetamine molecule has sympathomimetic qualities (raises the heart rate and blood pressure, causes smooth muscle contraction, etc.), but is not a strong central nervous system stimulant. Dextrorotary-methamphetamine is the molecule that provides methamphetamine with the stimulant and euphoriant qualities that make it a drug of abuse by promoting the release of dopamine and then inhibiting its reuptake in the brain.<sup>33</sup> A racemic mixture contains equal parts of levorotary- and dextrorotary-methamphetamine.

In the 1970s, phenyl-2-propanone was not a controlled substance; its sale was completely unregulated. Instead, the DEA relied on the cooperation of chemical sellers in what they called the "Precursor Liaison Program." Largely educational, this program taught chemical companies to look for businesses or individuals that were buying the necessary combination of chemicals to make illicit drugs, and then asked them to report those people. Participation was voluntary. Norton J. Wilder, the DEA agent in charge of Philadelphia, estimated that 40 percent of the labs seized nationwide in 1979 had been detected via the liaison program and the diligence of the chemical companies.<sup>34</sup> However, enterprising producers were able to acquire the necessary precursors quite easily in a relatively unregulated market.

On February 11, 1980, in response to the 1,200 percent increase in methamphetamine lab seizures over the latter half of the 1970s, the DEA made phenyl-2-propanone a controlled substance, making its diversion to methamphetamine production a much more difficult proposition. This new regulation, and the manner in which producers responded to it, set in motion events that permanently altered the geography of methamphetamine in the United States. On the West Coast, regulation led to innovation in the supply chain, the loosening of the Hell's Angels' control of the market, and a boom in clandestine methamphetamine production. On the East Coast, the scheduling further entrenched the relationship between the Pagans and traditional organized crime, and eventually led to the drug's fall from favor among eastern drug users. The spatial variation in these responses rewrote the drug's geography, leading to the agglomeration of methamphetamine production in the West and Southwest and setting the stage for the eastward-moving epidemic of the 1990s and 2000s.

## A West Coast boom

Meth producers on the West Coast responded nimbly to the loss of P2P, and the region became the center of methamphetamine innovation in the 1980s. As early as 1981, rather than continuing to try to make meth with P2P, producers there began to adopt the Red-Phosphorus, or Red-P method of methamphetamine production, which used ephedrine as the primary precursor.<sup>35</sup> The new method caught on for a number of reasons. First, it circumvented the need for P2P. After scheduling, only powerful criminal organizations such as the Hell's Angels or traditional mafia could find black-market sources of P2P and avoid being detected by the DEA. That option was not readily available to small-scale producers. However, in the early 1980s, ephedrine was not even on the government's radar, meaning its sale was not monitored, and any potential cook could easily buy it in bulk from wholesalers. Most other necessary ingredients could be purchased from hardware stores.

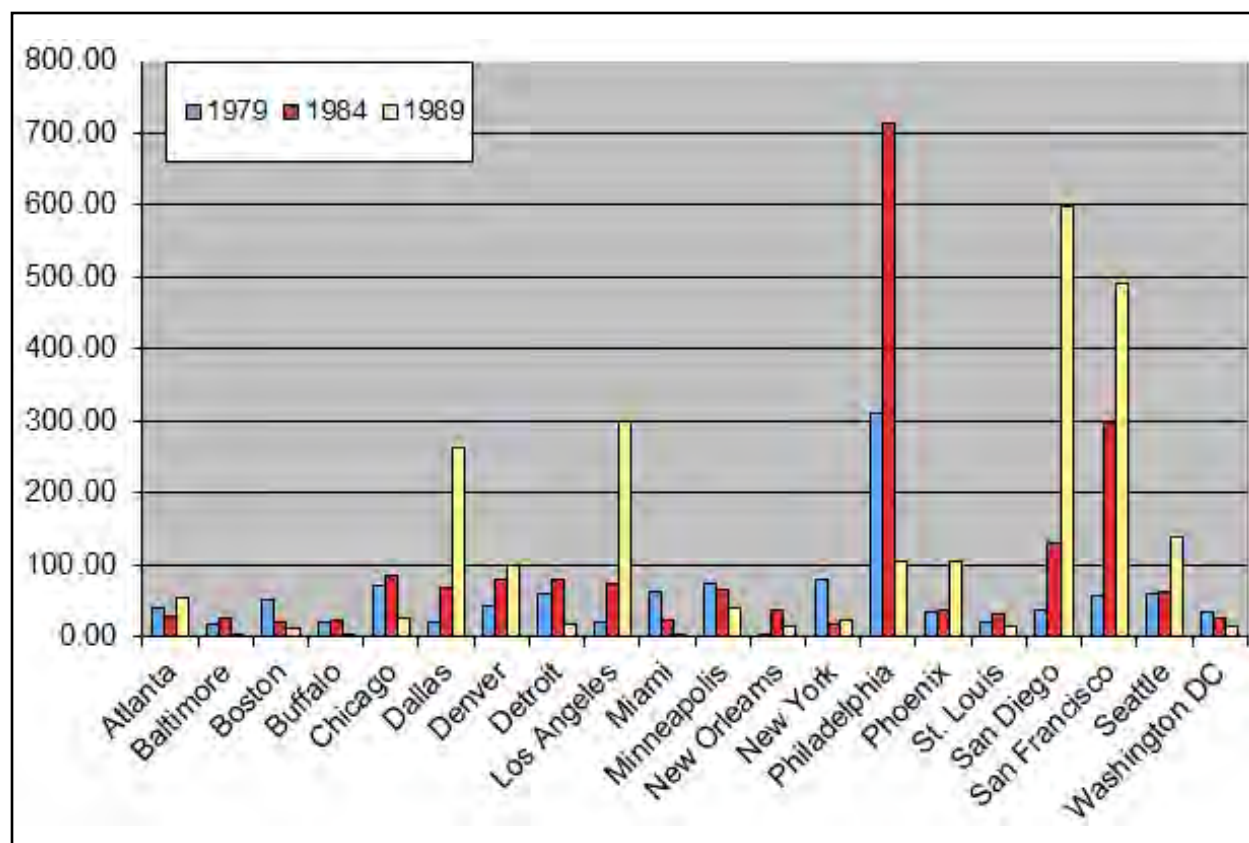
The wide availability of the new precursor meant that many freelance producers could enter the market. Small-scale cooks operating in groups of two or three appeared in large numbers, each producing a small amount of product for personal use and sale. This type of network was a far cry from the vast, vertically integrated, interstate drug-trafficking Hell's Angels that previously had driven the chain on the West Coast.<sup>36</sup> DEA agent Ron D'Ulisse lamented how the new method had changed the drug market in San Diego: "Everyone and anyone can do it. We were dealing with the motorcycle gangs, but now we find it's amateur hour, with people who don't belong in the business cooking methamphetamine."<sup>37</sup> The *Los Angeles Times* associated the transition with increased volatility in San Diego: "Virtually unlimited access to precursor chemicals drew a new breed of unsophisticated criminals into the methamphetamine business. It was these entrepreneurs, cooking drugs in their suburban garages and city homes, who were largely responsible for making the explosions, fires, and other dangers of drug manufacture virtually an everyday part of life in San Diego."<sup>38</sup>

Quality was another reason for the increasing popularity of the new Red-P method. The Red Phosphorous method produces meth that is composed entirely of dextrorotary-methamphetamine molecules, rather than the fifty/fifty racemic mixture found in meth produced from P2P. This means that the meth made with the Red-P method is significantly more psychoactive than racemic methamphetamine, and users get much more of the desired central nervous system stimulation with each dose.<sup>39</sup> To producers who were operating for profit, higher purity allowed the meth coming out of the newer labs to be "stepped on," or degraded with other products, at a higher rate than P2P meth, which translates into higher yields and profits. To users, the purity meant that the meth being made in Southern California after 1981 was a significantly more appealing form of the drug than anything that had come before it.

It does not seem coincidental then, that Southern California and the rest of the West Coast experienced a methamphetamine boom after the introduction of the Red-P method. Nationally, the DEA seized eighty-eight labs in 1981. By 1989 that number had jumped to 652, with the West Coast making up a disproportionate segment of that number. In 1987 California and Oregon accounted for 61.7 percent of all meth labs seized in the U. S. In 1988 that number grew to 66 percent (Figure 2).<sup>40</sup>

As the 1980s wore on, more and more meth producers adopted the Red-P method. A 1990 report on the procedure by a DEA chemist described it as "the most common method of manufacture of methamphetamine in the United States."<sup>41</sup> This was true, but only by a slim margin. Of the 416 labs seized nationally in 1989 for which the manner of production was determined, 53 percent used the Red-P method and 47 percent used P2P.<sup>42</sup> Regionality was strong. In Southern California, the percentage of labs using Red-P was as high as 90 percent in 1988.<sup>43</sup> Gilbreath (2012) estimates that in 1988, 45 percent of all the Red-P labs seized nationally were found in San Diego alone.<sup>44</sup>





**Figure 3.** Emergency room mentions for methamphetamine from the National Institute of Drug Abuse's Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) system.<sup>50</sup>

produced twenty thousand pounds of methamphetamine per year, or as he put it, enough to keep every man woman and child in the city high for six months.<sup>52</sup>

As the number of meth labs grew in California, the business of supplying precursor chemicals and equipment to cooks became a big business. In Southern California, ephedrine was being sold for twenty dollars a pound wholesale and \$150-\$230 a pound retail, a markup that yielded profits from \$10,000 wholesale to \$50,000 retail.<sup>53</sup> The DEA estimated that wholesalers were selling more than ten thousand pounds of ephedrine per year in Southern California, enough to make eight thousand to ten thousand pounds of meth. In 1986, the California Legislature sought to end this business and the clandestine labs themselves by scheduling the chemicals involved. Chemical companies (in this case wholesalers and retailers rather than producers) were quick to fight the new law.

One enterprising chemical supply storeowner, Robert J. Miskinis, hired a lobbyist to successfully delay the implementation of the law from 1986 until October of 1987. However, when it was revealed that this lobbyist had been hired by a man whose company, RJM Laboratories, had sold all of the essential ingredients to cook meth on at least 142 separate occasions between 1982 and 1984, the law's implementation was pushed up to April 1, 1987.<sup>54</sup> The new California precursor legislation required that chemical sellers report all sales of meth precursors to the state justice department. It also installed a twenty-one-day waiting period between reporting the purchase and delivery of the chemicals. Over-the-counter cold medicine preparations were excluded from the new law.



The California regulations were tough, but of course West Coast methamphetamine production was not confined to California (Figure 2). In the late 1980s, predictably, Oregon and Washington experienced major upsurges in meth activity. Between 1983 and 1987 lab seizures in Oregon grew from ten to 131, while in Washington they grew from zero to twenty-seven.<sup>55</sup> Observers saw the growth as a direct result of producers fleeing persecution in California, and in 1987 both states passed chemical reporting laws almost identical to those of California in an effort to push production out of their states.<sup>56</sup>

The chemicals listed in the new laws included anthranilic acid, ephedrine, methylamine, phenylacetic acid, pseudoephedrine, lead acetate, and methyl formamide. As was the case in California, the laws scheduled ephedrine and pseudoephedrine except in the form of cold pills, a loophole that was quickly discovered by cooks. San Diego Police reported that lab seizures dipped for only three months after the law's implementation in California before they saw production return to its previous levels.<sup>57</sup>

### East Coast busts

Before the scheduling of P2P, methamphetamine use and production on the East Coast was most prominent in Philadelphia and surrounding counties in the Delaware Valley. As was the case in the rest of the country, clandestine production had begun there in the 1960s as the police cut down on diversion of legally produced meth. Also following national trends, methamphetamine use had declined in most former East Coast hot spots during the 1970s. Most drug users in this section of the country turned to heroin or cocaine and did not return to meth as the decade wore on. Eastern Pennsylvania was the exception. Philadelphia, in fact, was the only city in the entire DAWN system to have a significant number of mentions for prescription methamphetamine in 1979 (Figure 3). It was also the only metropolitan area for which mentions of "speed" (the term used for nonprescription methamphetamine) ranked in the top ten of drugs mentioned at admission.<sup>58</sup> Meth's popularity in Philadelphia makes sense given the drug's demographics. Since the 1950s, it had been the drug of choice for many dispossessed and working class whites who used the stimulant as a means of extracting more hours out of the day, and Philadelphia in the 1980s had a large, white, working-class population. It also had a well-established organized crime element. As Jenkins (1992) explained: "It was almost inevitable that any city with a history of well-entrenched labor racketeering [like Philadelphia] would also have a thriving business in the manufacture and distribution of stimulant drugs."<sup>59</sup>

By 1980 clandestine meth production had become enough of a problem locally that the House Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control held a meeting in Philadelphia to assess the impact of the labs. In this hearing, local law enforcement referred to Philadelphia as the methamphetamine capital of the United States.<sup>60</sup> Much of the testimony that day focused on the Pagans Motorcycle Club and the partnership it had formed with traditional organized crime. Robert Walker, the congressman for the district, described the Pagans as simply hired muscle for the mob. Although it is true that some members of Pagans had acted as paid assassins for members of the Scarfo-Testa Mob, the overall relationship was far more complicated than that.<sup>61</sup> Sergeant Robert Collison of the Delaware State Police argued that the Pagans had cornered the market on meth in the area, testifying that "the street word is if you do not sell Pagan dope, or Pagan methamphetamine or crank, you do not sell it."<sup>62</sup>

The head of the intelligence division of the DEA, Frank Wickes, testified that traditional organized crime partnered with the Pagans to finance methamphetamine operations, obtain the necessary precursors, and find chemists to do the cooking.<sup>63</sup> The Pagans handled lab setup, security, and distribution of the final product. The Special Agent in Charge of the DEA in Philadelphia, Norton Wilder, predicted that the scheduling of P2P would only entrench that relationship as the market for P2P became increasingly lucrative and precarious.<sup>64</sup>

Wilder's prediction proved prescient. As the 1980s wore on, the Pagans formed partnerships with various organized crime units within Philadelphia. The groups involved included not only members of the traditional Cosa Nostra Italian Mafia, but also members of the Greek Mob, a Jewish and Irish group known as the "K&A Gang," and African-American groups.<sup>65</sup> The associations these mob members formed with the Pagans were not the top-down, corporate models one might expect from traditional organized crime, but rather reflected an opportunistic and temporary coming together of motivated parties.<sup>66</sup> The mob members who interacted with the Pagans did so of their own accord, rather than at the instruction of higher-ups within the organizations. Those interactions were fluid and temporary, and almost always dealt with the smuggling and trade of P2P.<sup>67</sup>

Because of the relationships formed between the Pagans and various members of organized crime, methamphetamine production and distribution on the East Coast remained dependent on P2P and in the hands of very few individuals in the 1980s. This lack of diversity directly contributed to the decline of the East Coast methamphetamine market because police could more easily identify and target important operators. Federal officials had been monitoring the activities of traditional (that is to say ethnically-based) organized crime since the 1920s. In 1970, they passed the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) as a tool for prosecuting such groups. At approximately the same time, the government also began to view Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs as an organized criminal threat. With all groups involved in the market already under government investigation in the 1980s, the methamphetamine networks around Philadelphia felt the full brunt of governmental scrutiny.

Government officials were unsuccessful at prosecuting mob bosses such as Nicodemo Scarfo for drug dealing under the Kingpin provisions of RICO, because the members of their organizations who entered the methamphetamine market did so for themselves, seizing an opportunity for quick profit. However prosecutors proved much more adept at convicting smugglers of P2P. Throughout the 1980s members of the Greek Mob, the K&A gang, and key Italian-American P2P suppliers from within the Bruno and Scarfo organizations were all successfully prosecuted.<sup>68</sup>

The Pagans faced a similar fate. In 1984 and 1985, government officials arrested over fifty members of the gang in the Delaware Valley region. Prosecutors focused on the group's mother club (the lead chapter), and by 1985, had successfully convicted the group's president Paul "Ooch" Ferry to eighteen years in prison. The vice president, sergeant at arms, and treasurer, along with nearly half of the rest of the mother club, also received sentences of at least fifteen years. Because their national organization was perhaps the most centralized and hierarchical of the Big Four, these arrests were particularly crippling to the gang.<sup>69</sup>

The successful actions against methamphetamine on the East Coast had a rapid and permanent effect on the market there. By 1989 the government had eliminated the body that controlled most methamphetamine distribution in the region as well most sources for P2P. Seizures declined in stepwise fashion. Philadelphia Police seized 105 pounds of meth in 1987, but only fourteen pounds in 1988. In 1989 that number grew again to seventy-seven pounds, all but two of which originated in one high profile bust. With a low-grade product in limited supply, drug users soon moved on to other stimulants. In testimony before the House Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control, Robert F. Armstrong, the special assistant to the mayor for drug control, stated in 1989 that crack had replaced methamphetamine as the drug of choice in Philadelphia.<sup>70</sup>

Data from the National Institute of Drug Abuse's Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) reflected the West Coast agglomeration and East Coast decline of methamphetamine at the end of the 1980s (Figure 3).<sup>71</sup> Among the cities included in the DAWN system, six had significant rates

of methamphetamine abuse reported between 1985 and 1989: Dallas, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Phoenix, San Diego, and San Francisco. Between 1985 and 1989 the number of emergency mentions of methamphetamine rose from 726 to 2,336 nationally. Three cities, Dallas, Philadelphia, and San Diego, accounted for 74 percent of those mentions in 1985, 63 percent in 1986, and 68 percent in 1987. However, as the number of mentions increased for San Diego (+501 percent) and Dallas (+271 percent), the number of mentions in Philadelphia declined by 41.5 percent.<sup>72</sup> Philadelphia's portion of national emergency room methamphetamine mentions dropped from 53 percent in 1985 to 4.5 percent in 1989.<sup>73</sup>

## Conclusions

In the era presented here (primarily the 1980s), methamphetamine declined as a drug of choice on the East Coast at the same time that it rose in prominence in the West. The unofficial title of the methamphetamine capital of the United States reflected this change, as it moved from Philadelphia in 1980 to San Diego in 1987. During the 1990s, the drug would continue to grow in prominence on the West Coast before migrating steadily eastward in the 2000s.<sup>74</sup> Policing agencies in charge of both tracking and stopping the spread of drugs have historically been unable to explain why methamphetamine has shown such a distinctively western distribution. However, this study has disinterred the roots of the drug's particular distribution through a historical analysis of its commodity chains. By emphasizing methods of production and product sourcing, I have shown that the western concentration of methamphetamine in the United States stems from sourcing decisions and production techniques adopted in the wake of precursor regulation established in 1980.

This should not be surprising. The long history of methamphetamine shows that changes in the regulatory environment have consistently produced unexpected and problematic results. Initial regulation of injectable ampoules led to the country's first clandestine labs in San Francisco in the 1960s.<sup>75</sup> After the timeframe of this paper, regulation of ephedrine sales following the Chemical Diversion and Trafficking Act of 1988 opened an opportunity for market penetration by Mexican Drug Trafficking Organizations, who produced methamphetamine at an industrial scale and greatly expanded the market.

The efficacy of the commodity chain perspective shown here demonstrates a need for more historical geographical analysis of all sorts of illicit commodities. By analyzing not just consumption, but production, distribution, and regulation as well, new insight can be offered on these significant global phenomena that can be of use not just to academics, but also to society as a whole.

## NOTES

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# Convergent Agrarian Frontiers in the Settlement of Mato Grosso, Brazil

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**Abstract:** The heterogeneity of development in the contemporary southern Amazon may be linked to different settlement experiences on the frontier. Three main types of productive settlement have been identified, including official colonization, private colonization, and spontaneous settlement, based on the differentiated motivations and resources of participants in these settlements. Not only did these different types of frontiers advance concurrently in the Amazon, but these frontiers sometimes converged in one location. The interaction of settlers from different groups sometimes created conflict, but also advanced the process of territorialization of the Amazon. This position is illustrated via a case study of one municipality at which three groups of settlers converged. Ultimately, though local popular history privileges the role of one of the three groups in bringing about the founding of the municipality and the development of a successful local economy, these achievements were only possible due to the different resources that each group brought to the settlement.

## Introduction

The heterogeneity of the Brazilian Amazon frontier experience is just beginning to be understood. Early researchers set out structuralist expectations of accelerating resource exploitation, capital accumulation by a relative few as land holdings were systematically consolidated, and the enlistment of the peasantry into wage labor as the agricultural frontier advanced into the Amazon.<sup>1</sup> A linear progression toward the homogenization of Amazonian places has not occurred, however, even as highly capitalized industrial agriculture has continued to advance in the region.<sup>2</sup> Today, the Amazon is a tapestry of highly globalized and globalizing cities, relic frontier towns, marginal extractive landscapes, and panoramas of modern, industrial-scale agricultural production with a range of landholding sizes. Efforts to make sense of these highly differentiated frontier outcomes must include reexamination of frontier settlement, which was a considerably diverse process.

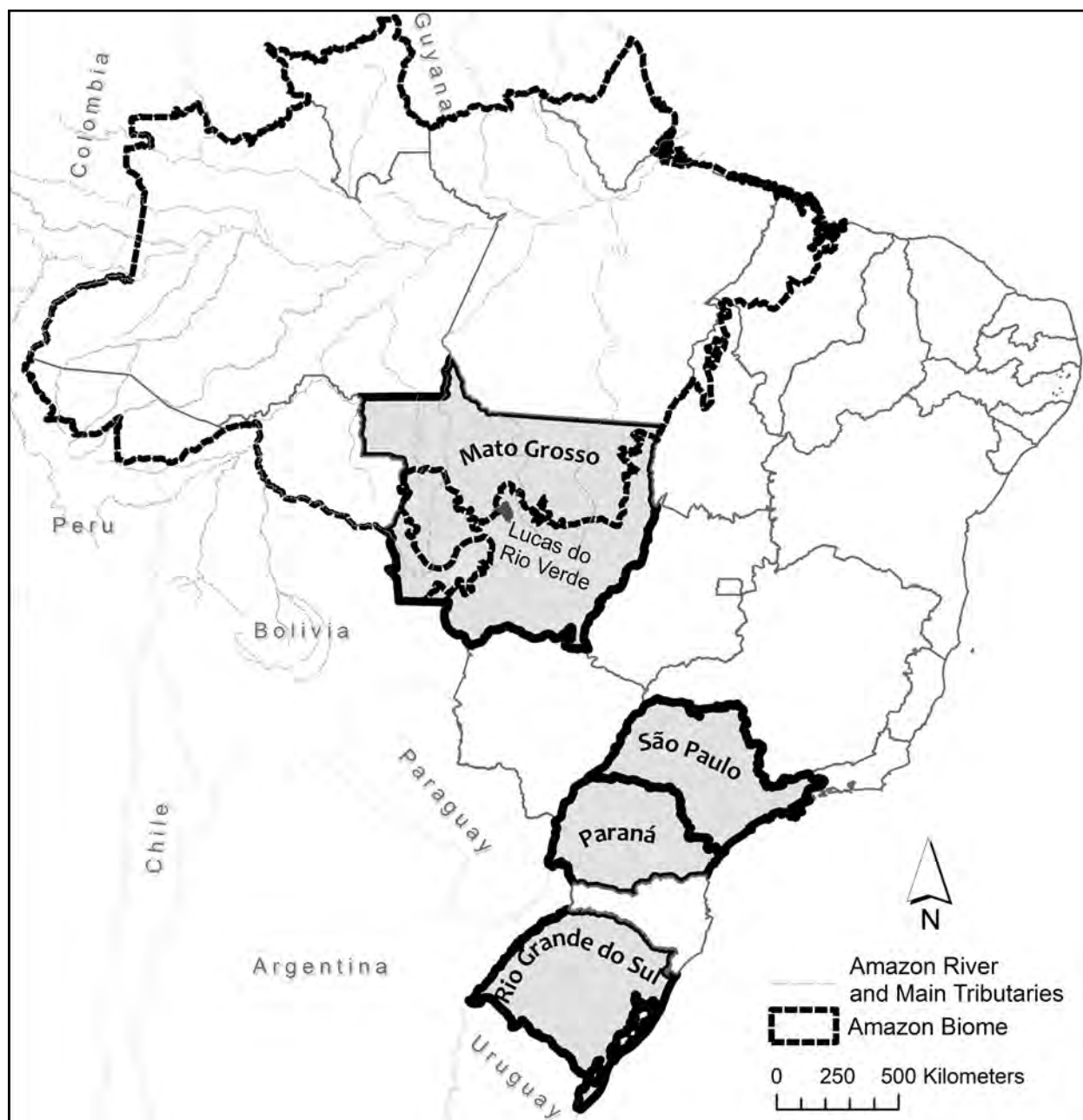
The Amazon region has supported various production systems and millions of people for thousands of years and has periodically generated boom economies related to agriculture and mining activities.<sup>3</sup> Most recently, beginning in the 1970s, Brazilians took a renewed interest in the Amazon as a site for development via the expansion of industrial agriculture. Today, less than forty years after this most recent campaign to populate and develop the Amazon and integrate it into the national project, the region is one of the most important sites of agricultural production in Brazil, particularly in terms of soybean and cattle production. The massive environmental transformations that have taken place in the Amazon as the result of this influx of people and the subsequent agricultural and ranching booms have rightly received considerable attention from scholars and other observers.<sup>3</sup> The site of the most drastic of these transformations, the southern

Amazonian state of Mato Grosso, produces a third of the country's soybeans and is a leader in other types of agricultural production as well.<sup>4</sup> Many scholars have linked this agricultural production to deforestation and land concentration, and, likewise, have framed these negative environmental and social outcomes as consequences of state policies promoting export-oriented production and, more recently, corporate investments.<sup>5</sup> Others have pointed to the importance of small farmers in engendering the initial frontier clearings.<sup>6</sup> While the outcomes of settlement in Mato Grosso are becoming ever clearer and continually evolving, the complex socio-historical processes that catalyzed these transformations across the state remain poorly understood.

With regard to the use of geographical terminology employed here, in Brazil, the term "the Amazon" can refer to various spatial extents from the northern and western parts of the country. These include an administrative region created in the 1970s—the Legal Amazon, in which Mato Grosso is fully located—and a federally defined tropical forest biome. Mato Grosso is located partially in the far-southern portion of the Amazon forest biome; the remainder of the state extends outside of this biome into the Cerrado, a tropical savannah (Figure 1). This amounts to most of the state occupying a transitional zone, or ecotone, between the two biomes, but being subject to most administrative policies pertaining to the Legal Amazon. Present-day residents of this region may or may not consider themselves to be residents of "the Amazon," but for settlers arriving during the 1970s, the region was clearly seen as the Amazon, a distant and difficult place to settle. At this time, the human population of this region was very low and most natural vegetation (which, depending on the location, could be open grassland, scrubland, sparsely wooded areas, or dense forest) was still intact. Recent indigenous presence in the specific site that would become Lucas do Rio Verde, in central Mato Grosso, is unknown. The settlement activities discussed in this paper are responsible for the much of the initial removal of this native vegetation, a process that continues today.<sup>7</sup>

Scholars of the Amazon have identified various settlement frontiers, or types of settlement, in the agrarian Amazon, including state-sponsored official settlement, private colonization, and spontaneous settlement, but relatively little attention has been paid to the variety of lived experiences within these frontiers. This paper is an effort to fill this gap in the literature and a continuation of the efforts of the handful of researchers who have so far worked to weave these experiences into the larger narratives of frontier change.<sup>8</sup> These three main types of settlement in the Amazon did not act in isolation from one another, however; instead, different types of settlers competed for spaces on the frontier over time as they were made accessible and desirable for settlement. The outcome of decades of shifting policies for the Amazon emanating from the federal level, and of a progressively worsening economic situation for the Brazilian population had, by the 1980s, created not an orderly and advancing frontier planned and executed by the authoritarian government, but instead, a landscape "latticed with migrant trails," some of which could be traced directly back to Brasília and some of which could not.<sup>9</sup>

This paper examines the intersection of three major agrarian frontiers in one site, Lucas do Rio Verde, Mato Grosso (referred to from here on simply as Lucas). Merely thirty years after its initial settlement, the municipality is widely recognized as a model of success in terms of its economic development, competent management, and approach to environmental conservation.<sup>10</sup> These successes are popularly attributed to the pioneering spirit of one particular group of settlers, but concurrent claims to land and pushes for land tenure resolution, contributions to the development of local social institutions, and advances in local agricultural production made by all the settler groups were important. The Lucas case demonstrates how contested and simultaneous claims to the same location on the frontier, though they often resulted in violence, could also have the effect of hastening the development of institutions and material improvements as competing groups strove to influence the nature of territorialization and the consolidation of



**Figure 1.** Brazil with Pertinent States Highlighted.

state reach in the locale.<sup>11</sup> Evidence presented in this paper also demonstrates that colonists of all three frontiers were motivated by a multiplicity of factors, including economic, political, and cultural motivations, which continued to evolve during the process of arriving and settling on the frontier.

The primary sources of information drawn on for this paper were found in the Municipal Archive of Lucas do Rio Verde, where I was able to consult collections of oral histories, newspapers, narratives, and analyses written by local historians; primary documents related to the early administration of the municipality; and collections of secondary sources written by Brazilian

scholars about the settlement history of the region, but that English-language scholars have yet to use. In addition, I conducted semi-structured interviews with twenty farmers on a variety of topics, including settlement history, and informal but ongoing interviews with select key informants with particular knowledge about the settlement and development of the municipality. Finally, data about settlement histories in each of Mato Grosso's 141 municipalities were collated from various published sources to allow for visualization of settlement processes across the state.

These primary and secondary resources were invaluable for the detailed and unique information they supplied about the experiences of different people during the colonization project. It should be noted, though, that the contentious nature of the colonization and early development of Lucas means that many voices, particularly those who participated in colonization but moved on or back in the face of the considerable early difficulties, are considerably diminished in local narratives. The first colonizers of Lucas are still alive and the scars of the early conflicts on the local, collective psyche are still apparent and sensitive. Indeed, there is a palpable discomfort among many of the municipality's remaining "pioneers" in discussing their early past, even as they recount its glories. The fact is, many people were bullied, intimidated, and sabotaged into leaving the settlement, in spite of the "populist frontier" narrative and identity that prevails among many agricultural actors and other residents of Lucas today.<sup>12</sup> It was, though, in many cases, the organization and institutions of the unsuccessful settlers that supported the successful settlement and transformation of Lucas into a leading city. Fortunately, Brazilian scholars of the frontier have sought out the stories of the people who ultimately did not stay in Lucas, which helps fill in gaps in the local record.

This paper builds on previous efforts by American and Brazilian scholars to expand our understanding of the historical geography of frontier settlement and territorialization in Mato Grosso. The paper begins by reviewing the three main types of frontiers from a political-economic viewpoint, which is the conventional framework for explaining the advancing of the agricultural frontier in Brazil. Instead of viewing these frontiers as discrete entities, however, this paper challenges efforts to draw strong distinctions among these types of settlement. Newly spatialized data on settlement histories across the state allow for the most complete visualizations yet of settlement patterns in Mato Grosso during the period generally considered to be the initial contemporary frontier advancement (1960s – 1980s), and show how these frontiers overlapped across the state. The second section draws on a combination of archival data, interview data, and secondary sources to present the settlement history of Lucas as a case study for the ways in which these frontiers intersected. The third section explores the outcomes of these encounters on the establishment of the municipality, as well as some of the legacies of the intersection of frontiers in Lucas.

### **The Geography of Frontier Settlement in Brazil**

The profound modern transformation of the Brazilian Amazonian landscape has frequently been attributed to the efforts of the military dictatorship (1964 – 1985) to fulfill its project of national integration and modernization. And indeed, the legacy, but also the incompleteness of this national project are undeniable: trunk roads that brought settlers to the Amazon in the 1960s and 1970s are important transportation corridors for the growing populations of the Amazon, though in many places they remain unpaved, and mechanized agriculture encouraged by favorable fiscal and economic policy drives the rapidly growing economy in parts of the Amazon, while other areas sit as degraded pastures and fields producing unimpressive annual yields. Conventionally, the Amazon has been characterized as a site of state intervention into a resource-rich, unterritorialized (uncontrolled) environment via the imposition of controls and conditions to facilitate the expansion of capitalist relations and extraction, with the predicted outcome



Soybean production (in tons)	Mato Grosso (MT)	Brazil	MT % of national production
1980 <sup>a</sup>	88,852	12,757,962	0.7
2011 <sup>b</sup>	20,800,544	74,815,447	27.8

<sup>a</sup>IBGE (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics), Agricultural Census, 2006

<sup>b</sup>IBGE, Municipal Agricultural Production, 2011

**Table 1.** Soybean production in Mato Grosso, 1980 and 2011.

ultimately being a homogenized landscape with wealth and resources securely concentrated in the hands of a few and a population of laborers to do the bidding of capitalist landowners.<sup>13</sup> The present reality, though, is one of considerable variability.<sup>14</sup> Scholars must now look for ways to best explain the heterogeneity of the agrarian frontier in the Amazon, including the failures of the state to execute its projects in a timely and coordinated way, and the role of actors not associated with the state in frontier settlement and transformation.<sup>15</sup> Finally, though the influence of the military government's projects on the Amazon is undeniable, the conventional political economic perspective does not account for the motivations and characteristics of the settlers that have acted out these transformations.<sup>16</sup>

Scholars have identified three main types of settlement on the agrarian frontier in the Brazilian Amazon—colonization projects, private settlement projects, and spontaneous settlement—which have generally been treated as separate frontiers acting in isolation from one another. The case presented here though, calls for a reassessment of this assumption by documenting the ways in which these three frontiers overlapped in Mato Grosso and arrived simultaneously in Lucas, resulting in outcomes unexpected for any of the singular frontier experiences. Furthermore, the rapid rise in importance of Mato Grosso as a producer of agricultural commodities makes it an important site of inquiry regarding frontier settlement. For example, at the time Lucas was first being settled, the importance of Mato Grosso as a site of soybean production was negligible, contributing just 0.7 percent of national production in 1980; by 2011 the state produced 27.8 percent of the country's soybeans (Table 1). The agents and geography of this remarkable transformation deserve closer inspection.

### State-organized settlement in Mato Grosso

The obvious influence of federal policies on the Amazon frontier has understandably focused the attention of many scholars on assessing the outcomes of various types of state-led, or directed colonization projects implemented by INCRA (National Institute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform) in the Amazon.<sup>17</sup> In 1964, Brazil entered into a period of dictatorship (led by a series of generals) for whom dampening social unrest, securing the land borders of the country, and capitalizing on the country's vast natural resources were key goals. Achieving many of these goals centered on more effectively incorporating the Amazon, which was the least populated and explored part of Brazil and includes many of the country's inland borders, into the national economy. This was to be achieved by building infrastructure in the region and by incentivizing

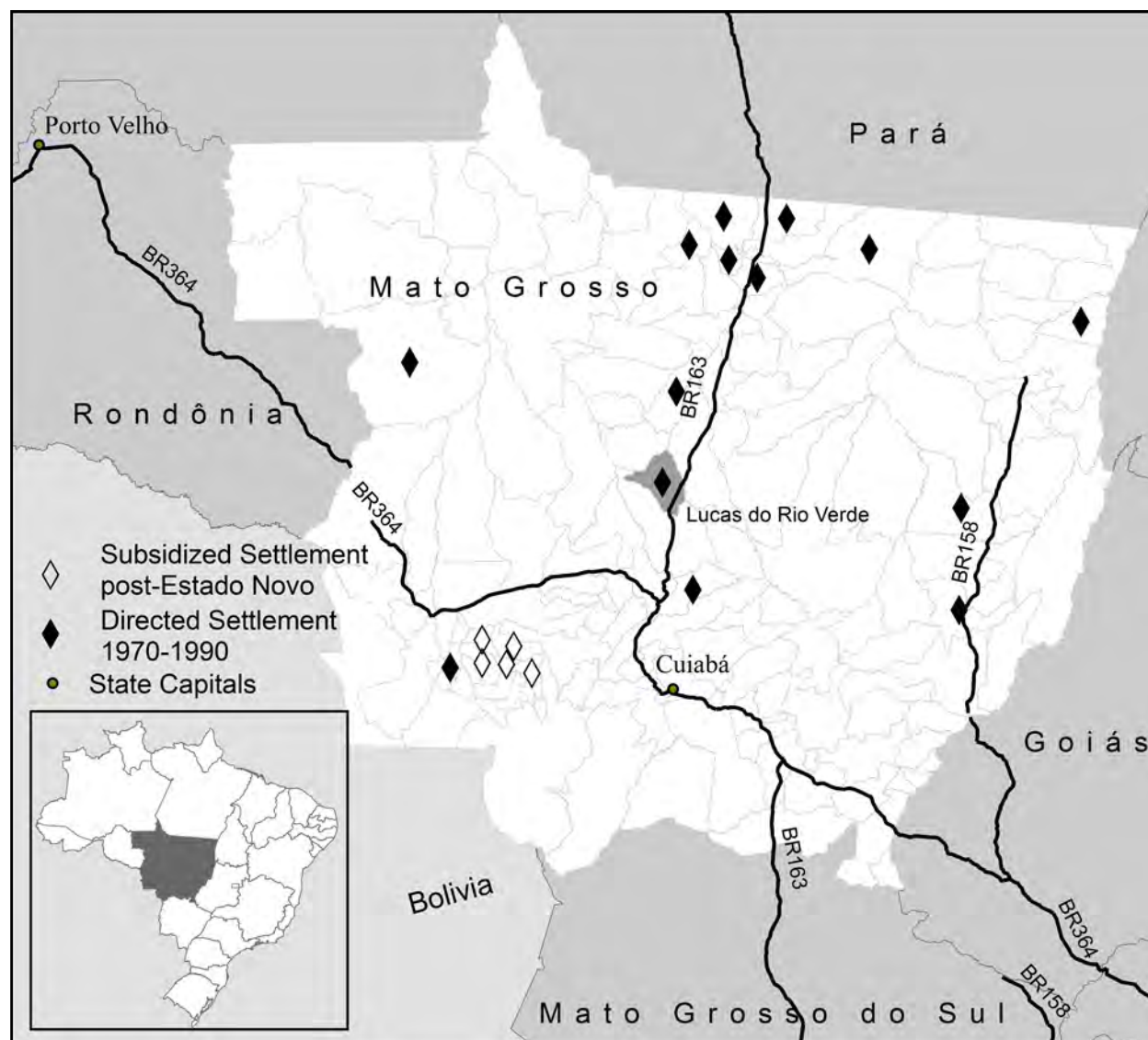
resource-poor families from other parts of the country to settle there.<sup>18</sup> A host of federal agencies and programs, including INCRA, were created in the 1960s and the 1970s in the service of achieving these goals, and a series of settlement projects through which INCRA would work to recruit settlers and execute their installation in the Amazon were launched. During the time period from 1964 to 1994, INCRA settled an impressive 16,219 families in Mato Grosso, though this was not even the state where INCRA was most active during this time period (for example, Mato Grosso's neighbor to the north, Pará, received over 43,000 families via INCRA settlements and, to the west of Mato Grosso in Rondônia, over 42,000 families were settled).<sup>19</sup> While certainly transformative in certain locations, it quickly became clear that these directed settlements alone would be insufficient to handle the massive land distribution issues facing the country.<sup>20</sup> Official settlements have continued and have increased in importance in Mato Grosso since the 1990s: from 1995 to 2002, 68,491 families were officially settled in Mato Grosso and 49,623 families were settled from 2003 to 2013, though administrative changes within INCRA and changes in the socio-political climate of Brazil after the end of the dictatorship in 1984 set these more recent settlements apart from those of the earlier period that is the focus of this paper.<sup>21</sup>

The spatial distribution of state-led colonization also speaks to the incompleteness of this project. Almost without exception, these projects accompanied the construction of important trunk roads in the region, as evidenced by the early federal colonization projects along some of the first roads being built in the Amazon in Pará (along the Trans-Amazonian highway) and in Rondônia (along the Cuiabá-Porto Velho highway) in the 1970s, and by the later arrival of official colonization to Mato Grosso, with the construction of the Cuiabá-Santarém highway in the 1980s.<sup>22</sup> The late arrival of federal highways to the central and northern parts of Mato Grosso meant that the first period of directed colonization in the state was truncated, lasting only from 1980 to 1981, though it lasted for up to ten years in some of the other Amazonian states.<sup>23</sup> Seldom discussed is a previous period of semi-directed settlement in Mato Grosso. These earlier settlements were underwritten by the state government of Mato Grosso in the 1940s and 1950s during a period of weakened federal control, following the end of the dictatorship of Getúlio Vargas (known as the *Estado Novo*, or New State, 1937-1945), though most of these lands ended up contributing to *latifundismo* (a prevalence of large landholdings) instead of smallholder settlement.<sup>24</sup> Overall, a litany of government programs and projects directly attempted to implant settlers in Mato Grosso throughout the twentieth century, but many of these attempts at directed settlement ended in complete failure with all settlers abandoning their plots.<sup>25</sup> In total, only nineteen of the 141 present day municipalities in Mato Grosso were affected by some form of successful directed settlement by state or federal agencies (Figure 2).

### Private settlement in Mato Grosso

Where directed colonization was either less prevalent or late to arrive in Mato Grosso, private colonization thrived, sometimes via non-profit settlement cooperatives and sometimes via for-profit companies that sold land parcels and offered a relatively straightforward path to legal land ownership. This process has been well explored by both Ozorio de Almeida in her book *The Colonization of the Amazon* and by Wendy Jepson in her work on the private colonization project in Canarana.<sup>26</sup> According to figures calculated by Jepson, between 1970 and 1990, 3,946,889 ha of land in 22,150 lots were distributed in Mato Grosso via private colonization projects, while only 3,100 lots totaling 549,982 ha (5.5 percent of the total area) were distributed in state-led or directed colonization projects.<sup>27</sup> Private projects would distribute many lots at a time, averaging between one hundred and three hundred lots per project.<sup>28</sup>

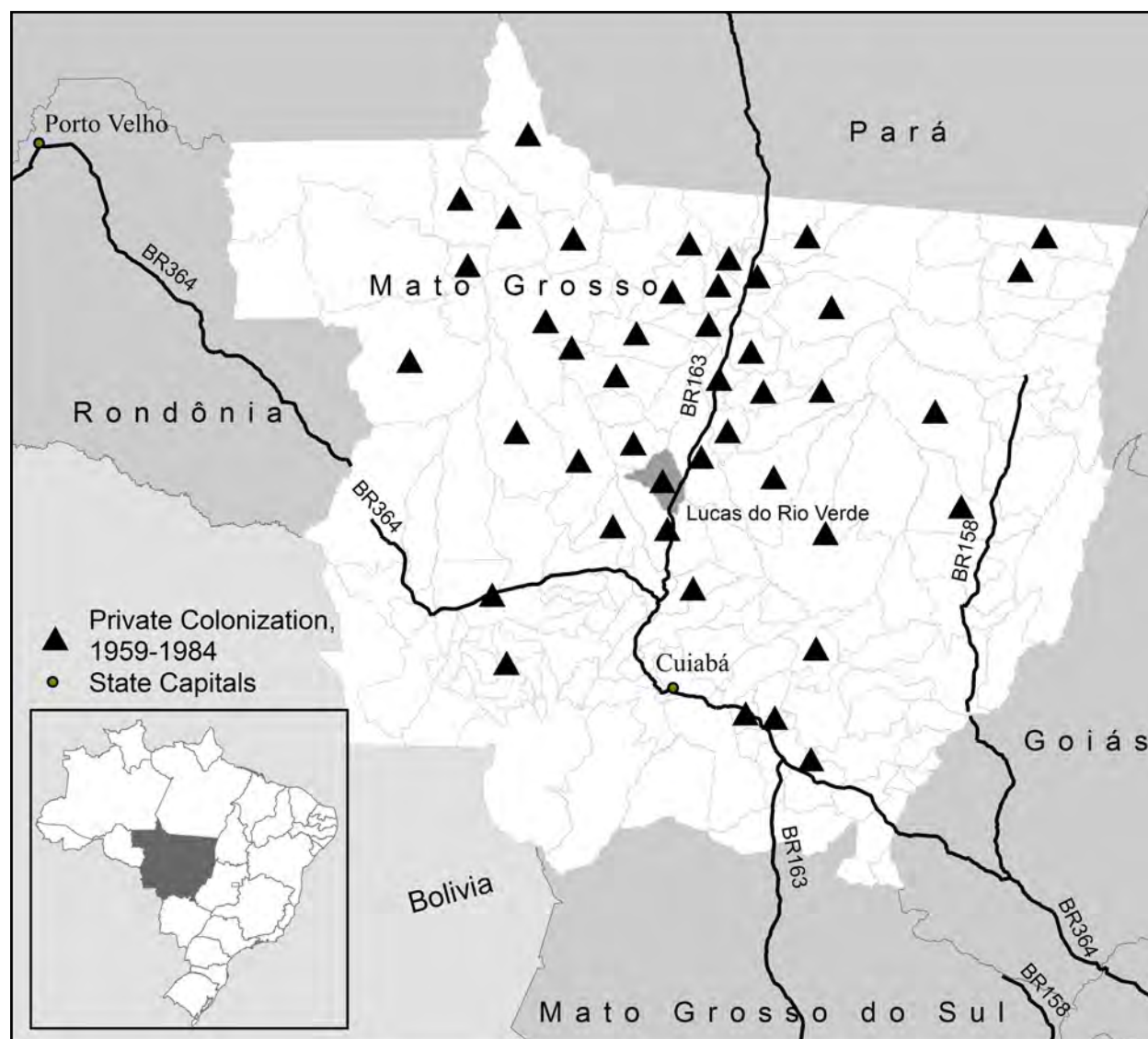
Private colonization was either absent or had a less significant impact in all other Amazonian states except Pará. Ozorio de Almeida shows that twenty-eight out of forty major



**Figure 2.** Official Settlement Projects in Mato Grosso (Adapted by author from Arcemy, 2007; IBGE, Municipalities).

sites of private colonization projects in the Amazon were located in Mato Grosso.<sup>29</sup> However, data from IBGE and from brief municipal settlement histories suggest that private colonization projects may have been even more widespread in Mato Grosso than this. Forty-two out of 141 present day municipalities can be identified as having been settled in part or in full by private colonization firms, which in some cases were carrying out projects at the behest of INCRA and in other cases were simply organizing land for distribution among cooperative members or endeavoring to make a profit off of the sale of the land.<sup>30</sup> These data correspond with other research that has identified similarly high numbers of private colonization projects in Mato Grosso (Figure 3).<sup>31</sup>

Private colonization was prevalent in Mato Grosso because of high demand for land that exceeded the ability of INCRA to attend to it, the slowness and uncertainty of getting access to land and title via public programs, and the interest of relatively more economically secure individuals in settling in Mato Grosso. Public settlement projects were notoriously risky for



**Figure 3.** Private Colonization Projects in Mato Grosso (Adapted by author from Arcemy, 2007; IBGE, Municipalities).

participants because admittance into a public settlement project usually required total or near-destitution, and there were high and frequently shifting barriers (discussed below) to gain access to the security and rights of a fully legal landowner via these projects. Though presumably out of reach for the poorest of potential settlers, for a relatively small premium above the already low prices of land in Mato Grosso, private settlement projects reduced transaction costs associated with gaining land access, and, therefore, often organized and executed more stable settlements in Mato Grosso during the 1970s to the 1990s than did the state programs.<sup>32</sup>

Private colonization in the Amazon did not exist in spite of public directed colonization, but because of it. INCRA was a powerful agency and had authority over all settlement projects in the Amazon in the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>33</sup> The agency asserted its authority, for example, by placing conditions on member-generated cooperative plans for frontier settlement such as requiring that the cooperative also provide services to members of official colonization projects and other



settlers; by limiting the allotment of land permitted for each member to be equal to that of the official colonists; or by simply designing resettlement projects for landless families agitating for land reform under the name of a colonization cooperative, as in the case of Terranova and later settlement waves in Canarana settlements.<sup>34</sup>

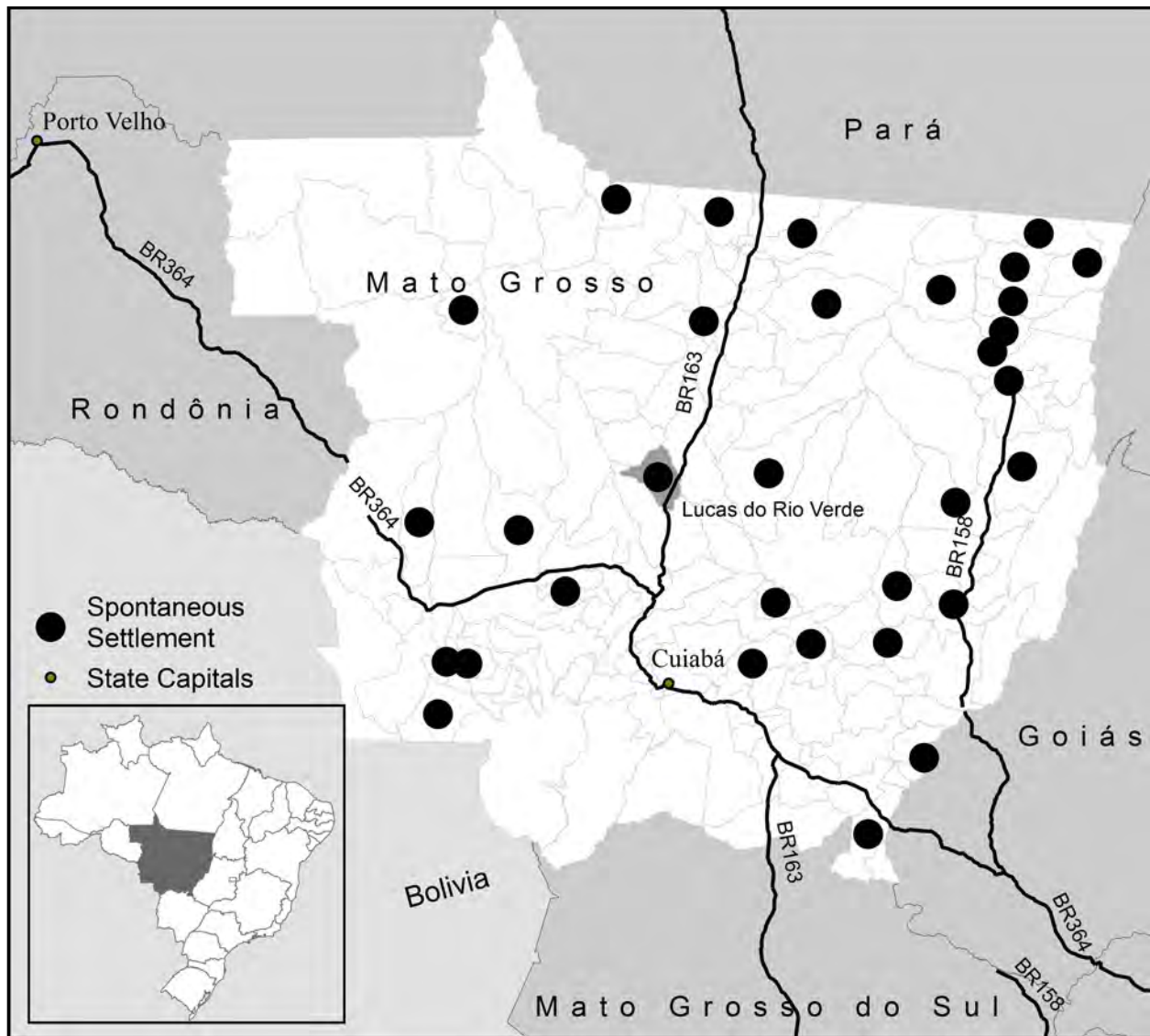
### Spontaneous settlement in Mato Grosso

In spite of the importance of these types of organized settlement, the vast majority of colonization in the Amazon has been what is considered to be spontaneous settlement.<sup>35</sup> Though technically extra-legal in terms of their actions, spontaneous settlers also played an important role in the extension of the state's territorial control to the Amazon frontier via the provision of services and infrastructure such as transportation networks, education and health services, and titling in parts of the frontier that the state and private colonization projects did not reach, as well as in some places where they did. Spontaneous settlement has been undertaken by various types of settlers, from poorly capitalized smallholders squatting without documentation on the margins of the frontier to large-scale landowners and *grileiros* (speculators) with (frequently fraudulent, at least initially) land titles.<sup>36</sup>

Due to its inherently off-the-books nature, the magnitude of spontaneous colonization is difficult to calculate and seems to have led researchers to assume that Mato Grosso was a less significant recipient of spontaneous migration relative to the other states on the agrarian frontier of the Amazon. Based on the selection of sites for the studies of Amazonian settlements as documented by Ozorio de Almeida, each of the main frontier states of the Amazon *except for Mato Grosso* had roughly as many case studies done on spontaneous settlements as on directed or private colonization projects, indicating that spontaneous settlements were at least as important as public and private organized settlements combined throughout the Amazon.<sup>37</sup> No studies on settlements of any type in Mato Grosso were documented at the time of Almeida de Ozorio's writing in 1992, which may seem to suggest that there were few spontaneous settlements there beckoning researchers' attentions. The vast amount of territory (45 percent) of the state accounted for by private and public settlement projects could indicate a paucity of other desirable locations left for spontaneous settlement.<sup>38</sup> The falling number of rural households in Mato Grosso, documented by IBGE census data (from 161,276 in 1970 to 109,216 in 1991) during the major period of settlement could also suggest there were few numbers of unaccounted-for spontaneous settlers in Mato Grosso during this time period.<sup>39</sup> Also, scholars have claimed that many of the spontaneous migrants to the Amazon came from the Northeast and so would be most likely to have settled somewhere in the eastern or the northern Amazon, instead of the southern Amazon where Mato Grosso is located.<sup>40</sup>

The way in which spontaneous settlement occurred makes it difficult to quantify. While nearly the entire state of Mato Grosso would have been considered rural in the 1970s, especially the central and northern parts, both official and private colonization projects aimed to create towns, or *vilas*, around which rural activities were organized. Spontaneous settlement, of course, rarely had such organization from the beginning, meaning that many instances of spontaneous settlement have likely gone uncounted.

Other evidence suggests, however, that the discounting of the history of widespread small- and medium-holder spontaneous settlement may be a serious omission in inquiries into the transformation of Mato Grosso's agrarian frontier. For example, the most influential group of pioneer farmers in Lucas today came neither from the INCRA-directed settlement project nor from the private cooperative colonization project, but instead, were self-funded, small-holder farmers who arrived before or just after these other projects. Consistent with the story of Lucas,



**Figure 4.** Spontaneous Settlement of Small- and Medium-holders in Mato Grosso (Adapted by author from Arcemy, 2007; IBGE, Municipalities).

research by Mato Grossense geographer M. Arcemy suggests that spontaneous settlers engaged in productive agriculture that influenced at least thirty-two municipalities' settlement histories (Figure 4).<sup>41</sup> More research is needed to better understand this type of settlement in Mato Grosso.

While by no means guaranteed, in some cases spontaneous settlers were able to eventually achieve registration and title for their land. Brazilian law has long allowed for legal acquisition of land via squatting on unclaimed public lands, which comprised the vast majority of Mato Grosso in the 1970s, with the right to register one hundred ha after one year and one day, and full title to up to 3,000 ha after five years of occupation and use of the land.<sup>42</sup> There are similar allowances for squatting on private but unused lands, though the amount one can claim via this process on lands already owned by someone else is smaller than on public lands.

### Convergent frontiers in Lucas do Rio Verde

Northern Mato Grosso, where Lucas is located, is presently the site of some of the most rapidly globalizing places in the world. These places feature local economies based on the production of large quantities of soybeans, corn, chicken, and pork for national and international markets. The region is a modern study of quick and effective transformation of uncaptialized natural resources (land) into highly capitalized production. By presenting Lucas' settlement history, I aim to highlight the way that the three main types of agrarian settlement overlapped in Mato Grosso. Together these three groups hastened the extension of private control over the region's natural resources via a process of accelerated territorialization, which was driven by competition among the different groups for space and state resources and which laid the foundation for development processes that are ongoing in Lucas and northern Mato Grosso today.

In 1981 and 1982, Lucas was simultaneously an official colonization project, the site of a private colonization project, and also claimed by spontaneous settlers, some of whom had been farming there for five years or more. In the end, most of the settlers who remained on the land and continue to farm it today are members or decedents of the spontaneous settler group. The colonists had the force of the military government behind them, and the members of the private colonization cooperative benefitted from a number of organizational and transaction-cost-reducing benefits, but the spontaneous settlers were the group that most successfully capitalized on the resources brought by these two other groups. Now, thirty years later, these surviving settlers are economically secure, having long-since established secure land title and, in most cases, expanded their landholdings to double or more of the property for which they first received title. The important role of the less successful groups of settlers in prompting the commencement of the land-titling process in the area, promoting closer linkages with this frontier area to government and social services, and advancing economic opportunities for local products has been diminished in dominant popular narratives, though the legacies of these innovations form the foundation of the municipality's present-day economic successes.<sup>43</sup>

### Spontaneous settlement in Lucas do Rio Verde

Families from the state of Paraná first began to buy up land in the area known today as Lucas (in lots of 1000 to 5000 hectares in size) in the mid-1970s, from individuals or organizations that had supposedly obtained registration rights from the state as early as the 1940s.<sup>44</sup> Land titling in Brazil, particularly in frontier areas, has a long and well-documented history of fraud, deceit, and contradictory legal treatment.<sup>45</sup> In this way, the early settlement of Lucas was a classic case: grileiros had purchased cheaply from the state, been given, or even simply forged documents for land that was otherwise unclaimed and untitled (known in Brazil as *terras devolutas*, or public lands), and had then turned around and sold the land, with or without some kind of legal contract of sale.<sup>46</sup> As this was all common practice, the families of spontaneous settlers (known as *posseiros*, or claimants) that bought land in Lucas at this time knew that although the legality of their initial land purchase was questionable, staying on the land and making it "productive" for one year and one day would be extremely favorable for their eventual attempts to regularize, or make legal, their land claims in the future.<sup>47</sup>

The *posseiros* began to arrive in Lucas, then known as *gleba Rio Verde* (or the Rio Verde plot) essentially concurrently with the 9<sup>o</sup>BEC (9<sup>o</sup> *Batalhão de Engenharia e Construção do Exército*, or 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion of Engineering and Construction of the Army) and the construction of federal highway BR-163, a trunk road running from the state capital of Cuiabá north into the state of Pará in the mid-1970s. Thus, the *posseiros* who first settled in present-day Lucas corresponded to neither stereotype of spontaneous settlement in the Amazon; these were not disenfranchised and impoverished peasants, nor were they highly capitalized corporate land speculators--these

were mostly families who had voluntarily sold some or all of their land holdings in Paraná and had come to Mato Grosso with the goal of buying larger tracts of land to achieve social mobility in Mato Grosso more easily than they could have in Paraná.<sup>48</sup>

From approximately 1976 until 1981, the posseiros' claims were uncontested in Lucas, and they were able to focus their full attention on the practical problems at hand, not the least of which was learning to farm in a tropical climate on land with sandy, acidic soils. Though the legality of their land purchases was murky and they had few other resources, the local bank—a branch of the national Banco do Brasil—accepted their claims to the land and provided financing for agricultural activities based on them.<sup>49</sup> Opening the frontier was exciting, but challenging.<sup>50</sup> For example, even once highway BR-163 had been completed, the quality of the road was terrible, prone to wash-outs, and combined with the long distances (it was 200 km to the nearest town, the municipal seat of Diamantino), traveling was a significant undertaking and represented a serious hardship for anyone settling in Lucas.<sup>51</sup>

In 1981, the posseiros were informed that the area around the Rio Verde had been appropriated for an urgent land reform settlement and that their lands would be confiscated without compensation to allow for the settlement of landless families from the state of Rio Grande do Sul (RS). Though they were at first assured by INCRA that the lands they were using would be spared from any official settlement, the plans for the project ultimately included the lands that were already claimed by the posseiros, thereby setting the stage for conflict and struggle engendered by the government's contradictory agendas regarding titling, populating, and developing the area once the new settlers arrived.<sup>52</sup> At this point, some of the posseiros returned to Paraná or moved on, but others (approximately eighty-five families in total) decided to organize and work with INCRA for continued access to the land alongside the official settlement project.<sup>53</sup> Ultimately, most posseiros would receive 200 ha from INCRA, the same amount as the official settlers, though some of the families had been claiming much more land prior to the project, up to 2,000 ha. This was not a wholly bureaucratic undertaking; some posseiros threatened violence against the "landless vagabonds" that were being brought up from RS as part of the project.<sup>54</sup> To understand the way these struggles unfolded and their resolution, we must first examine the roots of the land problems in Brazil's southern-most state, RS, from where the settlers in the official INCRA project in Lucas came.

### *Official colonization project PEA-Lucas do Rio Verde*

The families that eventually joined the INCRA settlement in Lucas did not wish to move to the Amazon; their arrival there represented an option of last resort after they had attempted both creating spontaneous settlements and demanding land reform in their home state of RS. By the mid-1970s, land concentration was rapidly taking place in RS due to new financial incentives offered by the federal government to develop mechanized agriculture. Moreover, the growth of families had, over the decades, led to a near exhaustion of places on which to put new farmlands in RS. These concurrent developments were the source of growing unrest, caused by both rapid urbanization and rapid growth in rural landless populations in a state, that for generations had an economy based largely on family agriculture.

Land concentration in RS in the 1970s was marked; for example, between 1976 and 1978 alone, RS lost 61,000 small properties.<sup>55</sup> Another driver of unrest related to land access in RS was the improving legitimacy of indigenous lands and rights. Non-indigenous families had been both encroaching on and settling as rent-paying tenants on the lands of one group, the Kaingang, since their reserves were established in the early twentieth century.<sup>56</sup> In 1978 the Kaingang, forcibly and with the support of the state agency FUNAI (*Fundação Nacional do Índio*/National Indian Foundation), expelled some one thousand non-native families who had been collectively



squatting on up to a full 65 percent of their reserve (9,634 ha).<sup>57</sup> Some of these ejected families would eventually make their way to Lucas via the INCRA PEA (*Projeto Especial de Assentamento*, or Special Settlement Project).

The families expelled from the Kaingang reserves insisted that they be granted land in RS, but the governor of RS claimed that there was no available land and they would have to accept offers of employment or settlement in the Amazon. By settling the colonists in the Amazon, the government hoped to both resolve the landless problem brewing in the South, and at the same time advance its interests of promoting productive settlement in the Amazon.<sup>58</sup> Some of the colonists eventually accepted placement in colonization projects in other states, including two projects in Mato Grosso--Canarana and Terranova, both administered by the cooperative Coopercol.<sup>59</sup> A certain subset of the families eventually formed a camp at a crossing near Ronda Alta-RS called Encruzilhada Natalino, and were joined by other families also facing problems of land shortage, including four families who had found the official settlement at Terranova to be untenable and returned, as well as four other families who had returned from Canarana.<sup>60</sup>

Calls for comprehensive agrarian reform intensified from within the camp. Calling the situation at the camp a national security issue, the government dispatched a military brigade to guard the camp. Under the watch of one Major Curió, well known at the time for his abusive psychological tactics for the suppression of local uprisings, the camp was transformed into a full-on militarized zone, complete with barriers, apparatuses of surveillance, and visible police presence at all times. The military promoted INCRA settlement projects in Mato Grosso (as well as in Bahia, Acre, and Romaira, though these were later abandoned in favor of only settling people in Lucas) to the settler, who were unenthusiastic about the idea of moving far from their home state, with slideshows and videos. Meanwhile, conditions in the camps continued to worsen. There were food and water shortages, leading to illnesses and deaths.<sup>61</sup> Dwellings were made of cardboard and plastic, and provided virtually no protection against the elements. On top of all of this, state and local police threatened violence against the settlers, and local landowners hired gunmen to infiltrate the camps and threaten and beat the settlers. Desperate to bring an end to the rapidly deteriorating situation, Curió eventually resorted to paying certain colonists to talk favorably about the Lucas project. In the end, he was able to convince 203 of the 506 families in the camp to go to Lucas.

The PEA-Rio Verde was to have more than 270,000 hectares available for settlement. These 270,000 hectares would be divided into lots of 200 hectares each, with 100 hectares of each plot to be reserved as forest and the other 100 hectares available for productive use, with the remaining land to be parcelled out to later groups of settlers.<sup>62</sup> Economic activities predicted for the area were rice, corn, and soybeans. INCRA promised the colonists the following amenities in PEA-Rio Verde: basic infrastructure including 96 km of local roads, three schools, two health centers, administrative buildings, and an *armazém* (grain storage facility), as well as access to credit to work the land for planting, including deforestation, root removal, cleaning, grading, technical assistance, and fertilizer. Credit was to be conditional, based on accepting technical assistance and complying with a requirement to plant basic food crops for at least two years, a requirement that which was to be reduced by 50 percent during the rest of the finance period. The cost of the lot was to be based on the land value at the time--Cr\$370 (US\$3.98) per hectare in the Municipality of Diamantino--to be paid back over twenty years.<sup>63</sup>

### *Arrival and settlement at Rio Verde*

The settlers who arrived in Lucas from RS became known as *parceiros* because of the small parcels of land they received from the settlement project. They arrived in three rounds in 1981 and 1982. The failure of this group to settle long term in Lucas (less than 10 percent of them

would last more than two years) is attributed in local, popular history to their ill-suitability to the difficult work of farming on Brazil's agricultural frontier. This reasoning is mistaken, though; at least half of the *parceiros* were experienced farmers who, like the *posseiros*, were determined to continue to make their livelihoods from the land.<sup>64</sup> The failure of the official settlement in Lucas, instead, is a story of a group of people who were used by their own government as instruments for the extension of the reach of land tenure institutions over a previously unterritorialized locale, thereby facilitating the success of competing groups of settlers who easily moved in in their wake.<sup>65</sup>

The *parceiros* had been promised several basic benefits in exchange for their willingness to move to Mato Grosso with essentially no personal assets. For example, they were told that they would be provided with houses, but only upon their arrival did they find out that, instead, they would have to build their own houses, with wood provided to them by INCRA.<sup>66</sup> Additionally, out of the 200 hectares they had each been promised for farming, they learned that they would have to leave 50 percent of it forested in order to comply to the federal Forest Code as written at the time and that only 2 hectares of the land would be cleared for them. Due to the terms of their contracts with the Banco do Brasil, the bank that administered financial aspects of the settlement, the *parceiros* were completely dependent on the services of third-party vendors for everything from clearing and plowing to planting and harvesting.<sup>67</sup> These prices of payment for the services would be negotiated exclusively between the bank and the vendors, who frequently failed to perform services or failed to perform them adequately or with the appropriate timing. The *parceiros* never received the money they were being loaned; it went directly to the vendors, stripping the *parceiros* of their power to bargain for better services or prices. The nearest Banco do Brasil office was more than 200 km away in the city of Diamantino, a week's journey round trip on foot; complaints that did make it to the bank were often lost in a bureaucratic triangle among the employees of the Bank, INCRA, and the vendors. With no machinery and no access to independent financing, it was up to the *parceiros* to figure out what to do about clearing the other 98 hectares of dense vegetation that they were allowed to clear from their plots.

Low crop yields during the first year and changes made to the terms of the loan by the Bank furthered the troubles of the *parceiros*. Poorly performing crops meant that the *parceiros* were unable to bring in income via the sale of their crops to pay their loans, and a forced refinancing by the Bank meant that the *parceiros* had to start making payments during the second year of their loan instead of the fifth year, as had been the original agreement. Because their crops were not producing well, some *parceiros* worked as day laborers on the farms of the *posseiros* in order to earn money to buy food at the Cobal (government dry-goods store) store in town and to make their loan payments. Others relied on hunting and fishing to feed themselves.<sup>68</sup> INCRA declined to reevaluate the terms of the contracts between the *parceiros* and the bank during the second year of the settlement based on the actual conditions of the settlement rather than the predicted ones, which had been used as the basis for the original contracts. The *parceiros'* inability to make payments was viewed by the Bank as noncompliance with the terms of the loan, and the Bank refused to issue any more funds for the settlement in 1982, meaning that many of the settlers were unable to plant anything the second year. Under the terms of the settlement, INCRA maintained possession of the land titles for five years, so the *parceiros* had nothing with which to bargain. However, illegal purchases of plots from *parceiros* looking to leave the settlement, by *posseiros* but also by INCRA staff planning to resell the land for personal gain, were widespread.<sup>69</sup> On top of all of this, the INCRA executor in Lucas, José Ferreira Soares, was notoriously physically and psychologically abusive to the *parceiros*.<sup>70</sup> These factors illustrate the extent to which the objectives of the agency were not truly the successful implantation of impoverished families on the frontier.

### *Cooperlucas*

Meanwhile, a third group of settlers had also set its sights on the gleba Rio Verde. The members of a cooperative known as Holambra 3, based in São Paulo, had begun working in cooperation with INCRA for assistance in starting their project in the 1970s. They decided they would call their settlement project Lucas do Rio Verde, after a rubber tapper who had occupied the area at the beginning of the twentieth century, and the name of the cooperative itself was changed to Cooperlucas.<sup>71</sup> Because the area was frontier territory, cooperative members understood that they would be responsible for the provision of education, social and cultural resources, and the technical assistance and infrastructure necessary for producing, buying, and selling agricultural projects. Just before heading to Lucas, they were informed that a PEA would also be installed in the same location.

Upon arrival in Lucas in 1981, the *associados* (cooperative members) were surprised to find that there were also *posseiros* there making claims to area lands, which INCRA was partially granting. At first, it was unclear if the cooperative project would continue. In an attempt to preserve what they could of their plans for the settlement of the region, cooperative members proposed a *projeto integrado* (integrated project), which would include support for the *posseiros* who had negotiated with INCRA to retain a small amount of their claimed lands, and operate alongside the official settlement project. INCRA accepted the continuation of Cooperlucas in the Rio Verde area, but with some conditions. The cooperative would be allowed to settle up to 150 families at the site (though only fifty families ended up participating), but it had to be fully responsible for “creating and implanting the commercial, agroindustrial, and social infrastructure and to make it available for members and for the entire local community.”<sup>72</sup> This deal produced hard feelings between the *associados* and the *posseiros*, who were still struggling to resolve situation of their land with INCRA; each group thought the other was getting preferential treatment. The cooperative, which planned to provide schools and other social services to everyone at the settlement, should have been a unifying force, but instead it was viewed suspiciously by the *posseiros*. INCRA employees, for their part, actively made it difficult for the cooperative to execute planned projects such as educational programs, contributing to growing suspicions that INCRA was not truly interested in the successful settlement of families in Lucas at all. Cooperative leaders, like the *parceiros*, reported receiving death threats from Ferreira, though at least one author has accused some of the *associados* of issuing threats of violence to further their cause as well.<sup>73</sup>

### **From Settlement to Municipality**

On August 5, 1982, Lucas was declared an *agrovila* (agricultural settlement) within the municipality of Diamantino, its first step toward autonomy and a sign of official recognition that the settlement process had been effective.<sup>74</sup> However, as a result of the physical hardships, isolation, violence, and lack of economic opportunities, many *parceiros* had already abandoned their plots or were in the process of doing so by the end of 1982. In fact, more than 90 percent of the *parceiros* would leave Lucas do Rio Verde by the end of 1983, almost without exception selling their plots to *posseiros*, INCRA employees, or land brokers for nothing more than the cost of a bus ticket home or to the next settlement.<sup>75</sup> These “sales” of land were technically illegal, since the *parceiros* had never truly owned their lands. The terms of their contracts with INCRA and the Banco do Brasil had deferred transfer of titles to the colonists until five years after settlement, but the sales went uncontested by the government, suggesting that the primary goal of the project in Lucas was the delimitation and registering of lands, not the support of any particular group on the land. And, indeed, in spite of the exodus of *parceiros*, the population of Lucas continued to grow.

In 1983, Cooperlucas was invited to participate in PRODECER (*Programa de Desenvolvimento do Cerrado*/Program for Development of the Cerrado), a bilateral Brazil-Japan project for the production of grains in the Cerrado for export to Japan. The project operated by providing special financing to cooperatives for agro-industrial infrastructure projects in specific, strategic locales. North-central Mato Grosso had, by this point, become a target for the development of industrial-scale agricultural production on the part of the federal and state governments.<sup>76</sup> Thus, the selection of Cooperlucas as a participant in the project was clearly strategic for the government, as the smallness and newness of the cooperative did not otherwise make it a strong candidate for such a high-value project. Through this project, the cooperative was able to install the settlement's first grain drier; until then, locals had been dependent on grain middle-men to store and process their grains, at considerable cost. The drier was important in this history of Lucas because universal access to it improved relations between the cooperative and the remaining *parceiros*, as well as the *posseiros*, all of whom benefitted from it.<sup>77</sup>

The settlement was granted the status of District in 1985. In the same year, INCRA settled ten more families from São Gabriel do Oeste, Mato Grosso do Sul in Lucas. These families also received 200 hectare lots, but from this point on, settlement and development in Lucas became essentially a private endeavor, facilitated by the government only in terms of promoting favorable conditions for the growth of the agro-industrial sector. From the point of view of the land tenure and regularization priorities of the government, the settlement was successful even though the majority of the *parceiro* settler left. The cumbersome, contentious, and legally ambiguous process of converting the lands in Lucas from *terras devolutas* to parcels that could be privately owned and farmed had been completed within less than 10 years. Lucas was legally elevated to the status of municipality on July 4, 1988 (State Law no. 5.318), counting 5,500 inhabitants at the time.

### **The convergence of agrarian frontiers in Mato Grosso**

The case of Lucas' settlement clearly shows how multiple types of settlement acted in concert as well as in competition with one another to carry out the settlement of the agrarian frontier. The eighty-five families of *posseiros* who continue to make up a large portion of the successful agricultural land-owner class in Lucas today were spontaneous migrants to the area, mainly from the state of Paraná. They had either purchased their lands from brokers or simply claimed them by setting about the business of farming them. The *posseiros* relied heavily on the land titling process initiated by the other local settlement efforts to gain free and clear titles to their lands and extend their landholdings, either by colluding with INCRA agents to push the *parceleros* off of their demarcated and registered lands, or simply by stepping in and buying lands that other settlers were leaving.<sup>78</sup> The developing profitability of local production came to depend heavily on the infrastructure established by the cooperative, and the children of *posseiros* attended schools begun by the cooperative in fulfillment of their agreement with INCRA.

Constructing a successful settlement on the Mato Grosso frontier in the late 1970s and early 1980s was not an easy task. In fact, the *posseiros* had been farming locally for five years when the other two groups of settlers converged on the locale, but they had not, during that time, begun the construction of any infrastructure related to a town. Of the 203 families of *parceiros* that originally participated in the project, less than twenty remained in Lucas after two years. Today, only a couple of these families continue to farm there. While there were conflicts among the *posseiros* and the *parceiros*, more of the difficulties stemmed from the treatment of the *parceiros* by INCRA. In fact, the outcome for the *parceiros* might have been even worse if there had not been a mutual recognition among the *parceiros* and the *posseiros* that they had common roots in the country's south.<sup>79</sup> The fifty families of cooperative members arrived in Lucas



with the most financial support and options of any of the groups; not all of them continue to farm in Lucas today, but their additional influence in the municipality is evident in the presence of the first local grain drier and the first local schools.

The government's goals for extending its control over the Amazon frontier in Mato Grosso were articulated via hybrid state and private initiatives, including regularization of lands claimed through *posse* (settlement first and applying for the title later) and the collaboration with cooperative settlements in the Amazon, in addition to official organized settlements. Many of the producers responsible for frontier development arrived in Mato Grosso from the southern states of RS and Paraná where other processes of reterritorialization were taking place. These smallholders were compelled to move to the frontier for various reasons, including pressure from agricultural modernization efforts, competition with indigenous groups over land, and the expanding number of rural households in the region due to generational expansion.<sup>80</sup> Their convergence in certain locales may help explain the spatial heterogeneity of successful development of agricultural economies on the frontier. Competition and cooperation among rival groups ultimately facilitated the establishment of institutions and infrastructure necessary to make a settlement successful and sustainable in the places with the most favorable conditions.

The PRODECER project is one specific example of the way the confluence of frontiers characterized the settlement of the Mato Grosso, and of Lucas more specifically. PRODECER was an official project with the aim of developing the Amazon for national benefits, but the government relied heavily on the activities of non-state actors to carry out the project. The settlement history of Lucas is a clear example of this rather complex interweaving of state and private settlement in the advancement of the frontier and the capitalization of the country's natural resources. In the end, individuals who were able to meet requirements set explicitly or implicitly by the state to turn the country's so-called empty spaces into globalized production spaces effectively extended the reach of the state to regions and resources that were previously uncontrolled by it.

## Conclusion

The Amazon has been transformed by multiple types of settlement frontiers, which sometimes overlapped. This helps explain the diversity of outcomes of settlement in the region. In 1981, three distinct groups of settlers, known locally as *posseiros*, *parceiros*, and *associados*, converged on the banks of the Rio Verde and together undertook the physical and institutional transformations that would, over the next three decades, form the foundation of the emergence of one of the most productive sites of industrial-scale agriculture production in the world. Here, I show that all three groups received state assistance and furthered the state project of divvying up and opening land in the Amazon for industrial agriculture expansion, but also, that all three groups ultimately had rather ambiguous relationships with the state. In the end, the personal relationships and private investments made by the settlers were also highly influential to the outcome of the settlement project in Lucas. The *posseiros* group ended up benefitting the most from the municipality's contentious beginnings, and this outcome continues to mark the social, economic, and political situation of the municipality today. Closer inspection of settlement histories from the various frontiers of agrarian settlement in the Amazon shows how different groups of settlers that overlapped on the frontier worked sometimes in competition, but sometimes in collaboration with one another to influence the allocation of public resources, to set and enforce boundaries, and to influence discourses that ultimately legitimated or invalidated particular settlement outcomes.<sup>81</sup> Future research should compare outcomes among municipalities with different types of settlement histories.

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# Reflexive Regionalism and the Santa Fe Style

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**Abstract:** The Santa Fe Style is an assembly of cultural features associated with the city of Santa Fe and its surrounding Upper Rio Grande Valley. The style, often dismissed as a confection for tourists because of its gloss and worldliness, is in fact a manifestation of reflexive regionalism. This overlooked cultural process occurs when worldly outsiders fashion regional traits into responses to the life challenges that they and their extra-regional reference groups face. In this case, outsiders fashioned what they found in early-twentieth-century Santa Fe into responses to challenges that accompanied the rise of American industrial capitalism. Threats to elite hegemony, the destruction of established lifeways, and the need for new perspectives on American society were prominent among the challenges to which the Santa Fe Style responded. Reflexive regionalism is thus the kind of cultural process that Regulation Theory posits but has found difficult to convincingly identify in the real world, i.e., one that adapts individuals and societies to periodic shifts in the logic and practices of capitalism. I examine seven individuals who made signal contributions to the Santa Fe Style. Each reveals a key facet of Santa Fe's reflexive regionalism. Together they show how this process created the Santa Fe Style and, more generally, how it works as an engine of cultural invention. The key concepts here are reflexive regionalism, the Santa Fe Style, cosmopolitanism, Regulation Theory, the work of the age, and the project of the self.

The Santa Fe Style is an assembly of cultural features associated with the city of Santa Fe and the surrounding region of the Upper Rio Grande River. The style, often dismissed as a confection for tourists, is a manifestation of reflexive regionalism. This underappreciated cultural process occurs when outsiders fashion regional traits into responses to the life challenges that they and their extra-regional reference groups face. In this case, outsiders fashioned what they found in and around early-twentieth-century Santa Fe into responses to challenges that accompanied the rise of American industrial capitalism. The need for new class norms, the destruction of established lifeways, and the declining usefulness of established perspectives on American society were prominent among the challenges to which the Santa Fe Style responded. Reflexive regionalism is therefore the kind of cultural process that Regulation Theory posits but has found difficult to convincingly identify in practice, that is, one that adapts individuals and societies to periodic shifts in the logic and practices of capitalism. I examine seven individuals who made signal contributions to the Santa Fe Style. Each reveals a key facet of Santa Fe's reflexive regionalism. Together they show how this process created the Santa Fe Style and, more generally, how it works as an engine of cultural invention.

## The problem

New Mexico's Upper Rio Grande region is home to one of America's most distinct assemblies of region-based cultural traits.<sup>1</sup> The Santa Fe Style, as this assembly is commonly called, includes an unmistakable architecture; unique expressive forms in many crafts including wood working, weaving, and pottery making; and a distinct mix of subjects and styles in the

fine arts, especially in landscape and genre painting. The assembly also includes a cuisine, a literature that celebrates the region's lifeways and landscapes, and even a life model built on region-inspired creativity and consumption. All these constituents of the style are bound up in a semiotic package and enveloped in a dense mystique.<sup>2</sup>

The style has become more pervasive over time; it is more of a presence in Santa Fe and its region today than it was a century ago. This does not square with the cultural theorists' assumption that personal mobility and the fluidity of money, commodities, and ideas undermine place-bound cultural traits and weaken their hold on their domains, which allows cultural fragmentation and dissonance to replace cultural integrity.<sup>3</sup> Such cultural "disembedding," to use Giddens' term, or "deterritorialization" to use Appadurai's, is assumed to work with special force in cosmopolitan places.<sup>4</sup> The Santa Fe Style nonetheless thrived in and around a wealth-saturated and worldly city.<sup>5</sup>

There are two common explanations for the Santa Fe Style. Each comports with received wisdom about modern cultural possibilities and so might be considered orthodox. Each also has shortcomings that have grown more obvious with the accumulation of scholarly work on the Santa Fe Style. The first explanation holds that the style is genuinely old and indigenous, but uniquely resistant to the normal agents of cultural corrosion. Formed in the crucible of Spanish and Native American experience many centuries ago, this explanation goes, elements of Indigenous culture were powerful enough to bleed through the layers of succeeding history like a strong dye. Perhaps Mather and Woods best articulate this view in their influential book, *Santa Fe Style*. Santa Fe, they write, "remains uniquely its own place, its residents stubbornly and stoically insisting that tradition take precedence over change."<sup>6</sup> This interpretation sees the Santa Fe Style as an authentic regional culture in folklorist's understanding of authenticity; it is demotic and evolved.<sup>7</sup> It also makes Santa Fe out to be a real place in Relph's sense of the term; it is the product of the free choices and creative acts of those for whom it is home.<sup>8</sup>

The style's connections to Hispanic and Native American pasts are beyond dispute, and so is the strong local commitment to that past. But the bleeding-through explanation does not explain why the style's florescence began around 1890, precisely when the Santa Fe region's connections to the rest of America began to multiply and its integration into national life started to accelerate. The explanation also seems too neglectful of the capitalism that has never been far beneath the surface of American life. One might try to address these shortcomings by encasing the "authentic" explanation in Wallerstein's world-systems theory or a similarly broad theoretical framework that admits into its pale the play of cosmopolitan capitalism and local resistance. The style then becomes a redoubt of resistance to the intrusion of an alien order.<sup>9</sup> Adding this resistance factor can account for the timing problem but it cannot account for how, far from resisting alien intrusions, the style fed on the attention and contributions of outsiders.<sup>10</sup>

The second explanation takes precisely the opposite tack. It asserts that the style is fundamentally contrived rather than fundamentally authentic. It was a concoction baked up, albeit with some genuine local ingredients, to feed to tourists and other outsiders. Stewart Brand expressed this view when he wrote that Santa Fe's distinctive architecture sprang from, "the collusion of three building styles, [Pueblo, Hispanic, and territorial] and one generation of calculating boosters."<sup>11</sup> Chris Wilson, whose *The Myth of Santa Fe* is the definitive cultural history of Santa Fe, also saw such image creation at work, as the title of his book suggests. This contrivance explanation has abundant virtues. It gets the timing right. It squares with our understanding of how tourism prompts false claims to a certain kind of uniqueness.<sup>12</sup> It aligns with what we know about the role of commercial intent in creating the American West of popular imagination.<sup>13</sup> Perhaps most importantly, it squares with how Santa Fe's early twentieth-century boosters embraced the Santa Fe Style as part of a tourism-based strategy of growth for their



city.<sup>14</sup> But the contrivance explanation has a flaw that it difficult to ignore; it fails to account for the style's depth, dynamism, and wealth of manifestations. These characteristics do not comport with our understanding of how tourism hollows out cultural forms for economy of reproduction, or with how the stages that commerce sets for the tourist's undiscerning view tend to lack depth.<sup>15</sup>

The last decade or so has seen many excellent scholars including Rudnick, Burke, Wingert-Playdon, Cline, Redding and Eldrick, Booker, and the Larsons, who closely examine elements of the Santa Fe Style. Their work has deepened our knowledge of the style's history and of the individuals most centrally involved in that history.<sup>16</sup> This work has encouraged a more nuanced general understanding of the style's origins that recognizes the role played by talented newcomers. It also confirms that we are dealing with a cultural phenomenon that is beyond the interpretive reach of the ready dichotomies of authentic and artificial, real and unreal, folk and commercial.

In this more nuanced understanding, the creativity of these newcomers, sharpened by the emotional and cultural links they forged with the region, aided both the boosters seeking commercial advantage and the nobler task of celebrating something indigenous. If a new orthodoxy is emerging, it is this.<sup>17</sup> This newer, more synthesizing explanation incorporates strengths of both received explanations and hews closer than either to the actual historical circumstances surrounding the style's emergence. It does, however, have a shortcoming of both older origin stories in its genes; it does not acknowledge what these newcomers brought with them to the region--ideas, conventions, skills, preoccupations, etc. These things determined both how the newcomers saw the region and what they could make of what they found in it. The shortcoming leaves this newer explanation only a little more helpful than the older ones in illuminating the creative sources of Santa Fe Style that lay beyond the region, or in explaining the style's relationship to wider currents in American socio-cultural history. As such, the new explanation fails to take full advantage of recent scholarly accomplishments.

### **Reflexive regionalism**

The folklorist Archie Green proposed the term "reflexive regionalism" for the identity-enhancing relationship between folk culture and geographical area in which "lore delineates region and region delineates lore."<sup>18</sup> Green uses "reflexive" here to mean "involved" or "turned in upon itself." The region and its lore are in a closed, mutually reinforcing relationship that deepens and more sharply delineates each. We are dealing with a different sort of reflexive cultural process here, however, one involving both the region and the nation beyond it, and one in which "reflexive" carries a meaning closer to "occurring in reaction." In this second kind of reflexive regionalism, regional cultural traits emerge in response to national cues. In other words, the nation provides the incentives and guidance for regional cultural invention. The nation then provides the scales on which this invention is weighted. The regional culture produced in this way thus reflects, albeit in an altered and refractory form, the nation as a whole.

Regulation theory, which has proven useful in probing capitalism's relationship to its host society, allows us to fit such reflexive regionalism into the schematic of modern capitalism. Briefly summarized, the regulation theorists begin with the question that Boyer phrased as, "How can such a contradictory process [i.e. a capitalist economy] succeed over a long period of time?"<sup>19</sup> Anyone can appreciate the question; capitalism's accumulation strategies create an ongoing churn of social upheaval and personal dislocation. The regulationists concluded that the key to capitalism's robustness is its capacity to shape, or "regulate," its host society.<sup>20</sup> In other words, regulation theory posits that capitalism tends to shape society into forms that both facilitate profit seeking and relieve the stresses caused by that profit seeking. Scholars have shown how this regulation works through institutions that serve the interests of capital, through the actions

of its conscious or unconscious agents, and through the many deep channels of convention, convenience, and practicality that accumulation strategies cut into society.<sup>21</sup>

The Santa Fe Style and the reflexive regionalism that produced it were part of this change-accommodating process that the regulationists described. Each element of the style was a useful response to a challenge presented by industrial capitalism's rise and increasing sway in America. Some elements of the style constructively articulated the social and psychic discontents that accompanied that rise. Some dampened them. Other elements were part of new life models that met the personal challenges presented by a newly industrialized society. Still other elements blazed new pathways of consumption. And almost always, these elements opened new profit opportunities and helped to more deeply integrate the Santa Fe region into the wider circuits of national and international capitalism. The sum of these responses was not an involuted regional culture as the folklorists of old conceived of them, but it was a region-based way of seeing, thinking, behaving, and living. In short, it was a regional culture nonetheless.

The mainstream literature on American regionalism contains a trace awareness of this national-regional reflexivity. It is latent in Mumford's concept of emergent regionalism and in Botkin's concept of dynamic regionalism. Reflexive regionalism seems to lurk just below the surface of the romantic-reactionary regionalism of the Nashville Agrarians and in the more recent literature on creative ethnicity.<sup>22</sup> Some of the recent writing on the culture of Santa Fe and the Rio Grande region acknowledge that something akin to reflexive regionalism has been at work. Scholars, for example, have noted the influence of national styles on the region's artists; others have pointed out the preoccupations that writers brought with them to the region; still others have noted the importance of national opinion and national markets in shaping the work of those who created the style.<sup>23</sup> This awareness of outside influences has not inflated into a more general explanation for the Santa Fe Style, however.

Exploring reflexive regionalism is important business. We fear that our progeny will live in places that are wholly the product of sweeping and cunning accumulation strategies that deaden capacity for creative expression and thwart people's efforts to construct meaningful environments for themselves.<sup>24</sup> What happened at Santa Fe suggests sunnier possibilities of place. Although the Santa Fe creative project was effectively over by the middle of the twentieth century, it was the work of recognizably modern people responding, often skillfully and successfully, to pressing challenges posed by a recognizably modern form of capitalism.<sup>25</sup> Understanding and encouraging reflexive regionalism may be the best way we have to create places where locally grounded creative responses to the challenges of capitalism are possible, in other words, places that Relph and others with his sensibility would recognize as real and spirit-sustaining.

A key enabling premise of reflexive regionalism is that imaginative and talented, but otherwise ordinary individuals were (and are) capable of responding effectively to the socio-cultural challenges of modern capitalism. We do not normally assume this. The cultural critics of modern capitalism have tended to see the responses of ordinary people as limited in practice to servitude, disengagement, or resistance, be the choice the subtle one of Raymond Williams or the starker one of Mike Davis. Moreover, many of the foremost observers of twentieth-century America including Randall Jarrell, C. Wright Mills, William H. Whyte, Eric Fromm, Hannah Arendt, and Herbert Marcuse believed that modern capitalism had a devastating impact on personal creativity.<sup>26</sup> The interpretive personae that these observers constructed (the one-dimensional man, the other-directed man, the organization man, and the well-adjusted man) were shallow and passive entities. At best they were capable of furtive and ephemeral responses to their predicaments like creative consuming, ironic understanding, and little acts of sabotage. These constructs, with their limited capacity to respond to their predicaments and no capacity whatsoever to change them, continue to shape our view of individuals facing the challenges of modern capitalism.<sup>27</sup>

We do know, however, that the rise of industrial capitalism elicited creative and durable responses from ordinary and often historically anonymous people at key points in the formation of modern America. While those responses served industrial capitalism in a regulatory fashion, that is, they adapted society to its operations and, in cases, paved new avenues for its profit seeking, they also gave ordinary individuals the space and tools they needed to take advantage of what capitalism brought into their lives. Zunz and Aron showed how Americans constructed micro-cultures for the office, the factory, and even the corporate boardroom when these places became part of their lives. Warner and then Jackson explored how the enterprise and creativity of ordinary Americans gave the suburb its form, substance, and much of its culture.<sup>28</sup> The case for reflexive regionalism builds on such findings. It assumes that region-based cultural invention by talented and perceptive, but otherwise ordinary, individuals was within the range of effective responses to the rise of modern capitalism.

The three resources that we need to probe for reflexive regionalism in Santa Fe's cultural ferment are at our disposal. First, we now have a detailed picture of this period in Santa Fe's past thanks to the appearance of substantial histories of Santa Fe and its region in recent decades. Second, our knowledge of the lives of the many figures that took part in the Santa Fe creative project has blossomed thanks to the organization of personal papers and the appearance of many excellent biographies. Third, our understanding of the socio-cultural challenges that Americans faced during those years has widened and deepened. Together, these sources let us explore reflexive regionalism's role in the creation of the Santa Fe Style.

### **America comes to Santa Fe**

When Spanish soldiers, priests, and settlers arrived in the region of the Upper Rio Grande late in the sixteenth century, they found the Pueblo Indians, who were settled agriculturalists living in more than a dozen large, nucleated communities, or pueblos. The Spanish built missions and churches and founded their own agricultural villages among the pueblos. They established their capital, Santa Fe, on a tributary of the Rio Grande.<sup>29</sup> Once colonized, the Upper Rio Grande region became a remote bicultural region on the northern marches of the Spanish colonial empire, and so it remained for over two centuries. Elements of the region's Hispanic culture became indigenized. The Native Americans embraced Christianity and modified elements of European culture to fit their own needs. Although maintaining their separate identities and economies, the two communities generally got along; intercommunity trade, intermarriage, a shared religion, equitable distribution of water, and the common threat posed by marauding Apaches and Comanches all encouraged amicable relations.<sup>30</sup> The brief period of Mexican sovereignty in the early nineteenth century saw the beginnings of trade with the expanding United States, but little change otherwise.<sup>31</sup>

Santa Fe made an unfavorable impression on the American soldiers who came to occupy it in 1846 during the Mexican War.<sup>32</sup> Its squat adobe buildings struck them as barely fit for human habitation. One soldier compared the small, mud-colored city to a prairie-dog town.<sup>33</sup> They noted the absence of shade trees, paved streets, and other town amenities that they took for granted back home. Private Daniel Hastings wrote in his diary that, "great indeed was the contrast between the beautiful and magnificent city which my imagination had pictured and the low, dirty and inferior place which I then beheld."<sup>34</sup> The inhabitants of the city and the region made a comparably unfavorable impression. The occupying soldiers described them as dirty, lazy, fond of drinking and gambling, and Catholic. As a whole, Americans with voice were no more pleased with the human fruits of their victorious war. They feared that the Mexicans and Native Americans of their newly annexed territories would pollute what they saw as the nation's Anglo-Saxon wells of strength and virtue. The treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, which ended the war, sharpened those

fears by automatically extending citizenship to all Hispanic residents of the annexed territories who desired it. An editorial in the *Richmond Whig* warned that the “debased population” of the conquered lands would, once “summarily manufactured into American citizens,” bring the nation no good.<sup>35</sup>

The first decades of American rule saw the trickle of Americans from elsewhere into the region widen into a stream. The newcomers brought their technology, commerce, architecture, and city planning preferences, and Santa Fe began taking on an American aspect.<sup>36</sup> The most successful newcomers joined the foremost Hispanic families to form a new bicultural elite. Then in 1880 the railroad arrived, effectively linking Santa Fe to the rest of the nation for the first time. More Americans now arrived as settlers, entrepreneurs, sojourners, and tourists, and in many other roles.<sup>37</sup> Whatever brought them, and whatever else they brought with them, these newcomers arrived with two very American items in their psychic luggage. One was a need, indeed a compulsion, to establish their place in the world. The other was a sense of belonging to a new and unfinished nation. Both were essential for the region’s subsequent cultural florescence.

### The project of the self

The right to construct a satisfactory life for one’s self by one’s own lights and means was among the personal rights on which the American republic was founded. The rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness fed into and sustained this right.<sup>38</sup> Personal development and fulfillment, which we might call the project of the self, was a civic obligation as well as a personal right. The founding fathers held that only those who set themselves to making their place in the world, and acquired the civic virtues that the task imbued in individuals, could keep American society on an even keel and keep its democratic governing institutions properly inflated.<sup>39</sup>

This project of the self was generally straightforward in the early days of the republic because people had to find themselves and create their places in communities that were for the most part small, predictable, and as Wiebe described them, “homogenous [and] enjoyed an inner stability that the coming and going of members seldom shook.”<sup>40</sup> The local economy provided the material resources for social self-creation; local society provided the social resources; local norms provided the moral guidance; and successful local citizens provided the models. The range of personal strategies and the scale of realistic aspirations were limited by this localism, and the possibilities of innovative self-construction were scant. On the other hand, the local instruments of self-construction were simple enough for most individuals to grasp and use.

The middle decades of the nineteenth century undermined the localness and the simplicity of the project of the self. As American cities grew and the national territory expanded, the lure of distant opportunities drew people away from their birthplaces. Conversely, corporations and other great institutions intruded on local communities, weakening their hold on individuals, even on individuals who never left them.<sup>41</sup> Traces of this weakening of the local permeate the writings of Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson. Thoreau’s high place among American thinkers derives largely from how he disentangled his life from the lives of his neighbors and his thoughts from their thoughts. Once free of the grip of the local, the misanthropic Thoreau turned inward, but his friend Emerson advised his readers to turn outward instead and forge what he called “an original relation to the universe.”<sup>42</sup>

Many Americans had no choice but to form an original relation to the universe. The new corporations and the national economy they created thrust individuals onto a wider life stage regardless of their wishes. Many people found themselves in surroundings they did not understand, in lives they could not manage.<sup>43</sup> This disorientation in new places and new lives became a preoccupation of late nineteenth-century American thought and a prominent theme in its literature, as attested to by the popularity of such novels as Theodore Dreiser’s *Sister Carrie* and the Oz novels of Frank Baum.



The outward turn created many new opportunities to shape one's own life, however, and it introduced a new plasticity into the project of the self. In their drive for profits and markets, corporations created new ladders of mobility for the eager manager and the imaginative mechanic.<sup>44</sup> The new universities and museums of the era allowed greater scope for lives founded on scientific learning and scholarly pursuits. National markets for arts and letters multiplied opportunities for building lives on talent in these fields.<sup>45</sup> The easier accumulation of assets by the middle and upper classes of a now-wealthier nation expanded opportunities for travel, for disinterested learning, and for the pursuit of avocational interests. The new railroads, telegraph, and mail service that allowed commerce and industry to penetrate so many of the nation's heretofore inaccessible regions also permitted individuals to tap the resources of many new places in their self-creation, especially Western places on newly opened frontiers where so little had yet taken firm form. New ideals of inner growth and fulfillment, born of European Romanticism and filtered into American thought, added a more expressivist dimension to the personal project.<sup>46</sup>

As its field of opportunity expanded and the project of the self assumed new interior dimensions, it remained an intertwined personal and social obligation. Transcendentalism stressed how the search for their own well-being joined individuals together in socially beneficial union.<sup>47</sup> The popular utopian literature of the late nineteenth century was at pains to show how the redemptive possibilities open to the individual were linked those available to society as a whole.<sup>48</sup> Both practical progressives like Walter Lippmann and those of a more romantic inclination like Scott Nearing insisted that creating a worthwhile life for oneself and the great social projects that industrialism forced on the nation, projects that Walter Lippmann called "the work of the age," were the private and public sides of the same task.<sup>49</sup> It is useful to note that Lippmann's concept of work of the age is similar to regulation theory's concept of social regulation. And in late nineteenth-century America, both involved adapting society to what the nation's industrial capitalism had engendered: great cities, a consumer economy, great-power status, and all their consequences.

### **The work of the age**

The social and cultural work that industrial capitalism forced on the nation had many facets. Simply understanding the many dimensions of American newness was one of them. Writers like Dreiser, Edith Wharton, and William Dean Howells probed the nation's new social mores. Painters like Thomas Eakins and Winslow Homer sought telling visual clues to the new America in its bourgeois parlors, farm fields, and even in its hospital operating theaters. The utopian Edward Bellamy searched America's new social landscapes for paths to public harmony and personal perfection. Understanding was just the prelude, however. The work of the age also meant building and creating on that understanding. Institutions to manage new forms of education and administer newly professionalized services had to be constructed. New lifeways that complemented the new opportunities for working and consuming had to be created. Social classes needed the kit for their new roles in a changing America. The national elite required values that would allow it to lead a new great power onto the center stage of world affairs; the enlarged middle class needed habits and values that would fit city life and bureaucratic work; the working class needed norms and lifeways suited to mill towns and the factory districts of large cities.<sup>52</sup>

Although sometimes exhilarating, coming to grips with all the newness often provoked anxiety and sometimes even a sense of dire urgency. Observers like Herbert Croly, Henry Adams, Frederick Jackson Turner, and even Theodore Roosevelt fretted about the disappearance of old opportunities for personal accomplishment.<sup>50</sup> Anomie and kindred threats to the spirit, they feared, were waiting to pour into the void.<sup>51</sup> Some observers feared that the spread of mechanism and the rise of new and unfair forms of competition were injecting a debilitating coldness toward

others into society. Others saw the vividness of everyday life disappearing beneath the soot of industry and the pallor of office complexions. Moreover, many contemporary observers feared that society's guideposts were disappearing faster than new ones could be erected. Henry Adams, on whom this fear weighed heavy, described an America that was "wandering in a desert more sandy than the Hebrews had ever trodden about Sinai." The nation, he wrote, was trying "to realize and understand itself" and, earthworm-like, "catch up with its own head, and to twist about in search of its tail."<sup>52</sup>

These many challenges forced individuals to view the world differently and to live in new ways. In responding to the need to understand the nation taking shape around them, the learned and the inquisitive built the stock of knowledge on which the changing nation depended. In seeing the nation in new ways, the perceptive devised ways for others to see it. By living in new ways, forward-looking men and women created life models for others to emulate. When the railroad joined Santa Fe to the rest of America in 1880, the region and its features became more readily available for projects of self-creation and, through those personal projects, for the work of adapting America to the newness of its circumstances.

The individuals who would give the Santa Fe Style much of its form and substance began arriving in the region. Most came as adults, already intellectually formed, usually by experiences in large cities, major universities, or other culturally fecund places. Many of these individuals were already engaged with the era's challenges, and they brought that engagement with them. Their contributions to the Santa Fe Style were part of life work that looked beyond Santa Fe and the region for its orientation and its audience. Their wider frame of reference did not make these individuals cosmopolitan in Merton's sense of the term, that is, worldly-wise sophisticates with only superficial local connections.<sup>53</sup> Their attachments to the city and the region were undoubtedly genuine, but so was their sensitivity to their extra-regional reference groups: their readers, buyers, agents, patrons, reviewers, and friends elsewhere. Its founders' wide frame of reference accounts for many of the Santa Fe Style's striking features including its sustaining matrix of national institutions; its sensitivity to national aesthetic trends; and how it took the nation as a whole as the audience for its performances, the market for its products, and the student for its lessons.

This wide frame of reference also accounts for why the style had little resonance among region's Native American and Hispanic inhabitants. The elaboration of this new style in their midst clearly had many consequences for these inhabitants.<sup>54</sup> The socio-cultural challenges of urbanization and industrialization to which the style was a response, however—challenges such as the chilling of the national spirit, the need to live tastefully in a world of shoddy goods, and the need to adapt to office-or factory-centered working lives—had little bearing on their lives.<sup>55</sup> Hence the style had little meaning for them as cultural expression per se.

Botkin understood that key individuals could serve as magnifying lenses in cultural studies because the fine workings of a cultural process could often be seen reflected in their lives.<sup>56</sup> Botkin had folk cultures in mind, but given the importance of individual outsiders in creating the Santa Fe Style, his insight appears useful for our purposes. Their lives should reveal how national challenge and personal response worked in and around Santa Fe and, more generally, how reflexive regionalism works as both an engine of cultural invention and an instrument of capitalist regulation. Hundreds of individuals made identifiable contributions to the Santa Fe Style, and more than twenty were considered for scrutiny. In the end, seven whose lives seemed especially illuminating were selected: the writer Charles Lummis, the painter Ernest Blumenschein, the designer Mary Colter, the architect John Meem, the salonist and diarist Mabel Luhan, the administrator Edgar Hewett, and the lawyer and capitalist Frank Springer. Each made important contributions to the Santa Fe Style. Each has been the subject of at least one full-length biography that treats both life and work. Together these individuals reveal many of the national

challenges to which Santa Fe's reflexive regionalism responded. They also offer a diverse sample of the life projects from which the Santa Fe Style grew.

### **Charles Lummis: Humanizing the American spirit**

Charles Lummis forged the first clearly reflexive cultural links between Santa Fe and the rest of the nation. Lummis was born into the family of a prominent New Hampshire clergyman in 1859.<sup>57</sup> Like many sons of his state and social stratum, Lummis went to Harvard, where he absorbed distillates of the era's optimism about national achievements and its misgivings about the loss of old virtues. Bright but eccentric, rambunctious, and free-spirited, Lummis never fit in at Harvard and eventually left to become a journalist. He was working for a newspaper in Chillicothe, Ohio in 1884 when Harrison Grey Otis, the publisher of the fledgling Los Angeles Times, saw one of his pieces and offered him a job. Ever the eccentric, Lummis set out on foot from Ohio to his new job in California. Ever the self-promoter, he arranged to send dispatches on his adventures ahead to his new paper and back to his old one.

Lummis' first dispatches from the Upper Rio Grande region played to the negative racial stereotypes that were still so much part of its national image. In fact, Lummis' initial descriptions of the region's inhabitants were fiercely and gratuitously cruel. He found everything about the lazy and dirty "greasers" he encountered to be repulsive, even their food. "Not even a coyote will touch a dead Greaser," he wrote, "the flesh is so seasoned with the red pepper they ram into their food in howling profusion."<sup>58</sup> As the nearly penniless young traveler continued through the region, however, he repeatedly benefitted from local hospitality, offered, he later reported, without hesitation or fanfare by those who had little to spare. Lummis had an epiphany; he beheld a people untouched by the rest of America's increasing materialism, competitiveness, and coldness of spirit. Native New Mexicans still appreciated the non-material aspects of life, had an intact sense of dignity, treated each other with a respectful warmth, and enjoyed the comforting certainties of an ancient faith. The grandeur and beauty of their land and the luxuriant warmth of its abundant sunshine, he concluded, nurtured these virtues in them. The region-celebrating books that Lummis wrote in the 1890s, including *A New Mexico David*, *The Land of Poco Tiempo*, and *The Enchanted Burro*, were well received by a reading public wearying of the psychic costs of material achievement.<sup>59</sup> With these books, Lummis began transforming the region in the national imagination from an alien and inferior place into a region where deep indigenous wisdom and humane traditions immunized against America's new ills of the spirit. In so doing, Lummis, in Cline's words, "plant[ed] the seeds of a fertile literary movement."<sup>60</sup>

When others came to Santa Fe and the region, they came looking for the characteristics that Lummis had found. They found them and further celebrated them. Writers including Willa Cather, Mary Austin (a Lummis protégé), Mabel Luhan, Haniel Long, and John Nichols all wrote of the unique, enduring, and endearing qualities of the people and their land.<sup>61</sup> These writers more deeply etched the regional traits that Lummis described onto the national imagination. They strengthened the new national view of the region as a small, self-contained, alternative America, one free of many common American ills. These writers also turned this view into an elevating and creatively potent regional self-image.

Lummis' epiphany about the region and its inhabitants, although dramatic, did not deflect him from his journey or plans; he continued his trek to Los Angeles and became one of the young city's leading intellectuals, for many years editing the California-celebrating periodical, *Out West*. He built a grand, eccentric Spanish-style house for himself in the hills above the city; it remains a minor tourist attraction to this day. Lummis returned to the Rio Grande region periodically, sometimes for extended stays, and he continued to celebrate it in his writing, but it became just one of the places in the Southwest that figured in his great life project, freeing America from the grip

of what he saw as its deadening Anglo-Saxon heritage. Lummis' experiences in the Rio Grande region and then throughout the Southwest caused him to reject what was still the most privileged element of national ethno-cultural heritage. He came to see it not as a source of national strength, but as a source of a blinding national arrogance and the root cause of a national unhappiness.<sup>62</sup> He wanted all Americans to experience the Southwest, where the "Saxon excrescences" that he detested had so little purchase. He hoped that other Americans would be changed by the exposure to the region, much as he had been, and that a warmer and more humane national spirit would arise.<sup>63</sup>

### **Ernest Blumenschein: Creating a reflexive iconography**

Painters of the era were drawn to the same master task that drew Lummis: responding to the new America taking shape around them.<sup>64</sup> They asked themselves how they might capture the newness for others to see, how they might celebrate the nation's fresh opportunities and point out its new shortcomings. By using what they found in the region, artists complemented the regional literature with a regional iconography that encompassed a wide variety of painting styles and incorporated many personal idiosyncrasies, but was united in its focus on the people and the landscapes of the region, and in the intensity of its engagement with both.

Ernest Blumenschein, among the foremost of these artists in critical standing, was typical of them in many ways.<sup>65</sup> He came to the region as a trained artist, already well aware of the era's pictorial challenges. After growing up in Pittsburgh and Dayton, he learned to paint at the Art Students League in New York City and the Julian Academy in Paris. Blumenschein was already a successful New York-based illustrator and artist in 1898 when a Western illustrating assignment for McClure's magazine took him and another artist, Bert Phillips, through Taos, a village north of Santa Fe. A broken wagon there forced an unplanned sojourn. While waiting for the repairs, the depictive possibilities of the Hispanic village, the nearby Native American pueblo, and the surrounding land forcefully struck Blumenschein. It was, he later wrote, the first great inspiration of his life. Like Lummis' epiphany, Blumenschein's was life changing, but not all at once. He returned to his home in New York City and soon departed for another sojourn in Paris. Although in continual demand as an illustrator by East Coast-based magazines and publishers, Blumenschein began going west to paint in the summers, primarily to Taos, where Bert Phillips had already settled and a community of artists was forming. Finally in 1919, some twenty years after what he called his great inspiration, he settled with his family in Taos, where he became one of the most widely recognized and celebrated of the New Mexico artists.

Much as Lummis had done in this writing, Blumenschein portrayed the Rio Grande region as a place with lessons for a nation beset with troubling forms of newness. The brilliant colors of his landscape paintings chided America for its sooty and gray new industrial landscapes. His paintings of the region's wild places reproached Americans for what Higham called their "vices of gentility," that is, for spending too much time indoors, for acquiring office pallors, for putting up with confining and crowded cities.<sup>69</sup> Many of Blumenschein's paintings of life in the region had a timelessness that scolded America for giving itself over to heedless change.<sup>66</sup> The Native Americans and Hispanics he painted, often in the style of classical painters and sculptors, seemed to project a wisdom that was deeper and more durable than industrial America's growing stock of technical knowledge.<sup>67</sup> Blumenschein was not oblivious to the changes coming to the region, however, and he capitalized on what they could teach as well. He painted the new dams that were bringing the region's water, its lifeblood, under bureaucratic management. He painted his younger Native American neighbors in their purchased clothing, hinting how America's commerce was penetrating the lives of even its most spiritually independent and robust inhabitants.



In spite of their focus on local subjects and their physical remove from the centers of American art, Blumenschein and the other painters in the region remained very much part of the larger art world. Many followed the general stylistic shift from academic realism to modernism that occurred in the second and third decades of the twentieth century.<sup>68</sup> Their work often referenced the major promontories in the era's artistic imagination. Their landscape paintings often recalled Mediterranean landscape paintings, for example. Their intimate paintings of rural village life in the region owed a debt to the era's popular genre paintings of European peasant life. Georgia O'Keefe's now-iconic paintings of the region's rock formations are indebted to paintings of the stone canyons of Lower Manhattan, including some of her own earlier works. These links to the prevailing styles and the iconic places of the wider art world made the paintings of region's artists readily interpretable as responses to the era's wider iconographic challenges, and they were valued as such. By the 1920s, Blumenschein and other region-based artists were regularly showing in leading American art museums and were getting high prices for their work in galleries in New York and San Francisco.<sup>69</sup>

These artists created communities as well as art, and in so doing they fashioned a response to one of the foremost lifeway challenges of the era: how to combine the old advantages of small, self-contained communities with the newer opportunities of a more easily accessible world. The artist communities of Santa Fe, Taos, and several smaller places around the region offered local benefits like informal exchanges of goods and services, friendships reinforced by proximity, and perhaps most importantly, mutual encouragement in creative endeavors.<sup>70</sup> A visiting journalist wrote of Taos that, "The spirit of the place is to make something. Artists affect everyone and everyone affects artists, until Taos is now a whirlpool of self-expression."<sup>71</sup> These communities also helped their members remain professionally engaged with the national art scene.<sup>72</sup> The Taos Society of Artists, which Blumenschein co-founded, sent works by resident painters on annual rounds to galleries in the nation's art centers.<sup>73</sup> The Santa Fe artist community had similar arrangements.

Blumenschein and his fellow New Mexico artists thus forged a life model in the region that combined participation in the national art scene with participation in an intimate and creatively fecund local community. They also forged a life in which successful purchase in the national arts economy was advantageous in their cash-poor local economies. The artists could hire models, casual and skilled labor, and domestic help in the low-wage local labor market. They could acquire native artifacts at prices that did not bear the markups that took place when these artifacts entered larger markets. They could buy land in the local property market at prices reflecting the relative isolation of their communities and the modest financial resources of their indigenous neighbors.<sup>74</sup>

### **Mary Colter: A frame for the exotic**

Mary Colter was another artist who helped shape the Santa Fe Style, but unlike the Taos and Santa Fe painters, she did so primarily in response to just one task within the work of the age: fitting the middle class psyche to its new urban and industrial circumstances. Born in Saint Paul, Minnesota in 1869, Colter grew up in comfortable middle-class surroundings.<sup>75</sup> She showed precocious talent in many forms of visual expression and her family sent her to the California School of Design in San Francisco. Coulter's time at the school, the late 1880s, coincided with the American ascent of the Arts and Crafts Movement. Inspired by John Ruskin and other anti-modern British intellectuals, the movement offered crafted, aesthetically informed artifacts as a counter to the crude and tasteless manufactured products pouring out of the era's factories.<sup>76</sup> The Arts and Crafts Movement also proposed an antidote to the social ills of industrialization: artisan communities based on simple hand-production of goods. The movement spread to America,

where its social ideal appealed to anti-industrial sentiment and its aesthetic principles made deep inroads into popular taste, especially middle-class domestic taste.<sup>77</sup> Californians drew on their local Hispanic heritage to forge a regional variant of the Arts and Crafts aesthetic, the Mission Style, and Colter absorbed it at the School of Design.<sup>78</sup>

After graduating, Colter took a position in “visual merchandising” at Frederick and Nelson, Seattle’s leading department store. As objectivity and instrumental reasoning rose to new levels in public life, the family home became what Taylor called “the haven of warm sentiment in an otherwise cooling world.”<sup>79</sup> Thanks in part to the Arts and Crafts Movement, the middle-class home was also becoming a place where one might live tastefully in a tasteless industrial world. Colter mastered the art of arranging hand crafted and hand crafted-appearing merchandise into appealing domestic displays that stressed both taste and warmth for the store’s showrooms. Then in 1910 the Fred Harvey Company hired her to design the interiors of the new hotels and restaurants it was building in partnership with the Santa Fe Railroad.

Western railroads were by then promoting the territories they traversed as exotic places of escape and spiritual nourishment for the middle-class, whose “horizons of emotional fulfillment,” in Taylor’s words, were being straitened by bureaucratic routine and behavioral formality.<sup>80</sup> The celebration of the Southwest by Lummis and now others had elicited a favorable popular response and the Santa Fe Railroad threw itself headlong into the strategy. It established a marketing department that vigorously promoted the Southwest as the “Land of Enchantment” and engaged artists, including Blumenschein and others of the Taos colony, to provide art for use on posters, calendars, and brochures. It also engaged the Harvey Company to establish tourist facilities at stops along its route.<sup>81</sup>

These facilities presented a formidable design challenge; what was strange, unfamiliar, and perhaps threatening to middle-class Americans had to be rendered comforting and warm without sacrificing freshness or the capacity to excite. Colter managed it brilliantly by filling her restaurants and hotels with Hispanic and Native American motifs that she reworked just enough within accepted, but still-fresh, Arts and Crafts design principles to achieve a balance between the exotic and the familiar.<sup>82</sup>

In 1926, the Harvey Company acquired the La Fonda, Santa Fe’s foremost hotel, as part of this “Land of Enchantment” strategy; it intended to use the hotel as a base for guided excursions to the Native American pueblos and scenic attractions of the surrounding country. Called on to help renovate the hotel, Colter used the same strategy of wrapping the exotic with the familiar when she designed the hotel’s interior spaces, furniture, and fixtures. She refined Native American motifs, alloyed them with elements from the California Mission Style, and enriched them with her trained and disciplined imagination. She also filled the hotel’s interior spaces with locally crafted objects that referenced the Arts and Crafts aesthetic.

This centrally located hotel became the preferred lodging place for the city’s visitors and a favorite watering hole for its residents. As such, it became a fixture of Santa Fe’s social life and an important part of its aesthetic signature.<sup>83</sup> The many travellers who passed through La Fonda were exposed to Colter’s interpretation of regional crafts and design motifs; it was Colter’s interpretation that many undoubtedly took back home with them. The hotel’s interiors and the objects that filled them were also available to guide the region’s artists, writers, and life-style seekers in the arrangement of their own domestic interiors.

Colter’s work in Santa Fe, although important, was only one part of her creative relationship with the Southwest. She worked and found inspiration in other parts of the region. Mimbres pottery from southern New Mexico inspired her tableware for the Santa Fe Railroad’s dining service. Navajo sand paintings figured large in her interior designs for Harvey hotels in Arizona. The cliff houses of Mesa Verde in Colorado inspired the enchanting buildings and

follies that she designed for sites on the rim of Grand Canyon. Unfortunately, when rail travel declined, so did the commercial strategy that had given rise to her work, and she saw much of that work demolished in the name of progress. Shortly before her death in 1958, she remarked that perhaps she had lived too long.<sup>84</sup> Colter continued to be honored in Santa Fe until (and after) her death, however. And while recent years have brought a belated recognition of her genius and accomplishments, including the creation of a “national park” architectural style, Santa Fe was the one place where her work quickly transcended its original commercial context and become part of a larger cultural project.<sup>89</sup>

### **John Meem and the architecture of place**

No element of the Santa Fe Style is more recognizable than its architecture, with its earth tones and textures, its rounded, ground-hugging, organic-like forms, and its simple wooden embellishments. And no one contributed more to that architecture than John Meem, Mary Colter’s collaborator on the La Fonda restoration. Born to American missionary parents in Brazil in 1894, Meem came to America as a teenager to attend school in Virginia. After embarking on a banking career in New York City, he contracted tuberculosis and went to high, dry Santa Fe to recover in one of its sanatoriums. While there, he discovered the region’s building traditions. After recovering, Meem went to Denver for formal architectural training. With certificate in hand and a bit of work experience in Denver under his belt, he returned to Santa Fe in 1924 to establish a practice.<sup>85</sup>

Meem soon became the city’s foremost architect and remained so for the next four decades. During his long career, he designed several hundred buildings in and around Santa Fe and played a leading role in restoring the region’s ancient mission churches. A style based on the indigenous adobe building tradition had already emerged when Meem began practicing, but he brought genius to its possibilities. The adobe-based forms of his buildings flow into each like living things. They seem to have sprung from the soil of the region.<sup>86</sup>

Meem innovated in layout as well as form. In most of his hundred or so residential commissions, Meem eliminated the enclosed central patio and the semi-enclosed placito of the traditional regional dwelling and placed the outdoor living space around the house. In effect, he turned the traditional regional house inside out, which allowed him to more efficiently arrange the entertaining and dining areas, bedrooms, guest quarters, terraces, servant quarters, and garages that affluent modern Americans demanded in their residences.<sup>87</sup> It also allowed him to establish a more sensitive relationship between house and site, and a more intimate one between the interior of the dwelling and the vistas. With his combination of aesthetic and layout innovation, Meem created ideal dwellings for those drawn to the region by its scenic virtues and cultural ferment, dwellings where, what Patricia Brown called “a poetic meeting of the pueblo spirit and the material world,” might take place.

Santa Fe was the center of Meem’s mature life, and he became one of the city’s foremost and most civic-minded citizens. Santa Fe’s horizons were never Meem’s horizons, however. He wrote on architecture for a national readership. He took commissions elsewhere and he worked in styles other than the one he perfected. He was especially adept at a cool, classical modernism that carried only hints of regional references, a modernism that he brought to a peak of refinement in the art museum he designed for Colorado Springs. Meem in fact viewed himself as a thoroughly modern architect. Wilson described Meem’s Santa Fe buildings as Pueblo gateways from the modern world. While they can certainly be viewed as such, Meem also saw his buildings as responses to the architectural dictates of modern times.<sup>88</sup> Eliel Saarinen, an eminent architectural theorist that Meem admired, held that every historical period had a unique form-giving spirit that its architects had to respect. Modern times, Saarinen wrote, demanded elegantly simple buildings

in keeping with the elegance of the mathematics that undergirded so much of contemporary civilization and the simplicity of the basic laws that science was discovering at the heart of natural world. Meem argued that the adobe building tradition of the region aligned so completely with the spare and elegant underlying spirit of the time that it was an ideal base for a modern regional architecture that complemented the reigning international style.<sup>89</sup> Moreover, Meem often gave his buildings, whatever their style, a cool restraint and proportionality that reflected the wider aesthetic sensibilities of the era. As if ratifying the modernist spirit of Meem's work, the American Institute of Architects made him a fellow in 1950, a year in which modernism, running at full tide, was sweeping all before it.

### **Mabel Luhan: New elite lifeways and modes of cultural leadership**

One of foremost challenges facing Americans of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was forging life models that blunted the assaults of change and capitalized on its opportunities. Blumenschein and his artist colleagues used what they found in the region to forge a life model that capitalized above all on new opportunities for creative endeavors. Mabel Luhan forged another life model within Santa Fe's cultural project. Hers was built on creative endeavor as well, but also on inherited wealth and established elite status, and on the cultural entrepreneurship that these things made possible.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the American elite demanded of its members high levels of emotional self-restraint and conformity to stringent rules of behavior.<sup>90</sup> Women were expected to focus their energies on supporting their husbands' careers and nurturing their families; men were to focus theirs on commercial and professional success. Public expressions of personal idiosyncrasy or deep inner feelings were discouraged. Not surprisingly, some members of the elite, especially those with a creative or otherwise strong expressive bent, felt trapped. Moreover, when called on to support the arts, the elite gravitated toward mannerism and academic formalism that reflected its own norms of self-restraint.<sup>91</sup> This made it difficult for the elite as a class to exercise leadership in some of the most dynamic areas of high culture, and for members of the elite to benefit from engagement with fresh art forms.<sup>92</sup>

Mabel Luhan (nee Gansel and then Dodge for a while) was born into a prominent Buffalo, New York banking family in 1879. As a young woman she rebelled against the life prescribed for those of her gender and station, escaping to Paris.<sup>93</sup> The bright and forceful Luhan established herself there as a cultural impresario after the fashion of Gertrude Stein, who came from a similar provincial-elite background (and who had likewise rejected the restraining norms of her upbringing). Luhan then moved to Italy, where she acquired a villa near Florence, her Villa Curonia, and made it a center for artists and writers. In 1912 she returned to America and settled in New York where, true to form, she acquired a large apartment in Greenwich Village and made it a gathering place for artists and intellectuals, mostly of a reforming or radical bent. Her New York circle included Margaret Sanger, Emma Goldman, Walter Lippmann, and John Reed. In 1917 Luhan visited the Rio Grande region and, charmed, she bought a property adjacent to the Taos Pueblo. Shortly afterward, she made Tony Lujan, a member of the Pueblo, her fourth and final husband. (She changed the spelling of his surname to Luhan when she assumed it.) She envisioned making her property a base for exploring a region where the land, climate, and native lifeways combined to show Anglo civilization a path toward renewal.<sup>94</sup>

She built Los Gallos, a large and rambling regional-style house, on the property, along with several guesthouses, and she was soon playing host to creative luminaries, much as she had done at her Villa Curonia in Italy. Her New Mexico visitors included Leopold Stokowski, Thornton Wilder, Robinson Jeffers, and D.H. Lawrence. She pointed out the region's virtues as the subject of creative endeavor and encouraged them to incorporate it into their work. Luhan was especially



anxious to point out how, by incorporating Native American wisdom into their work, her visitors could help in “saving Western civilization from its rotting core.”<sup>95</sup> Luhan also contributed to the region’s literary identity with several books of her own. Her intimate and reflective *Winter in Taos*, often considered her best, showed how her inner life had become intertwined with the history, seasons, and moods of the place.<sup>96</sup> With this and her other books, she helped strengthen the introspective and quietist element of the region’s literary identity.

In creating a life for herself in the Rio Grande region, Luhan helped establish an elite life model that threw off chaffing bourgeois norms of behavior, political and artistic conventionalism, and an all-consuming commitment to family and commerce, but which did not reject elite prerogatives or elite responsibility per se. Rather, she showed how to use privilege and wealth to explore the creative possibilities of one’s surroundings and encourage such exploration by others. In working out a personal solution to the restrictions of her class, Luhan gave the members of the elite a path to personal liberation while offering the elite as a whole a means of re-exerting leadership across a broad range of cultural endeavors. Luhan also showed that the reflexive regional project under way around her was responsive to her kind of cultural entrepreneurship. Others, especially other women with varying measures of her creative talent, financial means, and force of personality, followed her lead, reinforcing the region’s distinctiveness as a place where the options and responsibilities of wealth could be linked to aesthetic sensibility and the creative urge.<sup>97</sup> Meem designed houses for those who followed Luhan’s lead. Colter provided an aesthetic of objects and spaces for them.

### **Edgar Hewett and cultural entrepreneurship**

Like Mabel Luhan, Edgar Hewett was a promoter of the cultural project underway in the region. But he differed from her, and from all the above-discussed individuals, in that he was not an artist and he made no direct creative contribution to the Santa Fe Style. Nonetheless, his supporting role in so many of the region’s creative endeavors made him as important as anyone in the formation of the style.

One of the striking characteristics of the Santa Fe Style was the suite of formal institutions arrayed around it. Museums, galleries, institutes, and foundations curated, interpreted, promoted, monetized, and reported on the style almost from its beginning. Edgar Hewett, who led two of the core institutions and profoundly influenced many of the others, was a tireless promoter—Brand may have had him specifically in mind when he spoke of calculating boosters lurking in the style’s shadows. Hewett was certainly calculating and he was a tireless promoter of the style, but he was not a booster in the normal sense of the term. While he took steps to aid the city’s commercial growth, promoting commerce was not his foremost aim; he was primarily intent on sustaining Indigenous forms of cultural expression and supporting the emerging Santa Fe Style. Hewett was an entrepreneurial administrator who saw that the region’s cultural past and its present cultural ferment needed modern institutions to promote them—and sometimes to protect them from baser sorts of commercialization. He created and led such institutions, and made a life for himself out of the work.

Hewett’s journey to Santa Fe had many stops along the way. Born in rural Illinois in 1865, he grew up there and in Missouri, where he became a schoolteacher while hardly out of his teens.<sup>98</sup> Hewett’s flair for teaching and his skill at administration led to a succession of ever more important education posts in Missouri, Iowa, and Colorado. By the early 1890s, he was the school superintendent of Florence, Colorado. There, his boyhood interest in Native American lore flowered into a disciplined passion for Native American art and artifacts. He spent his summers exploring the region’s ancient sites in a wagon he fitted out for his expeditions. In 1897, Hewett made a big career leap when he assumed the presidency of the newly established New Mexico

Normal College in Las Vegas. The innovative curriculum that he built around archaeology and native arts brought him national reputé, but territorial political machinations cost him his job in 1903. He capitalized on the latter by going to Switzerland to pursue a doctorate in archaeology at the University of Geneva. After completing his course work, he returned to America and established himself in Washington, D.C., where he threw himself into the affairs of the American Institute of Archaeology. Hewett became the secretary of its committee on antiquities, and in that position played key roles in establishing Mesa Verde National Park in 1906 and securing the passage of the important antiquities-protecting Lacey Act of 1907.<sup>99</sup>

While in Washington D.C., Hewett also threw his energies into a proposal for an AIA-supported field school for New World archaeology. When New Mexico offered to host the school and affiliate it with its new museum in Santa Fe, the AIA accepted and invited Hewett to establish the school.<sup>100</sup> Hewett returned to New Mexico in triumph to head both the school and the museum, and the two institutions formed the base of his long administrative career in the state. Under Hewett, the School of American Archaeology and the Museum of New Mexico made a wealth of ancient artifacts accessible to contemporary crafts practitioners, enriching the craft dimension of the region's cultural project.<sup>101</sup> Hewett made space in the museum available to contemporary artists and arranged for the museum to show their work.<sup>102</sup> With Hewett's encouragement, other museums were founded in the region, creating more display venues for ancient art, modern art, and sometimes both, drawing the two still more tightly together. Hewett personally encouraged two potters from the San Ildefonso Pueblo, Maria Martinez and her husband, Julian, to produce works modeled on the ancient pottery being discovered at the school's excavation sites.<sup>103</sup> The two responded with the "black on black" style. Its references to both ancient pottery and modern abstraction in the plastic arts made it popular, especially with avant-garde collectors, and it soon became one of the more recognizable styles of contemporary Santa Fe pottery.

Hewett's stature within the AIA grew with his successes in Santa Fe. He assumed a seat on the editorial board of its popular national magazine *Art and Archaeology*, and arranged for several of his New Mexico associates to join him on the board. This New Mexico group kept the magazine focused on the region and its cultural ferment. Frequent articles on the field school written by Hewett and his fellow Santa Feans portrayed the region as one where the continent's antiquity was a forceful living presence and creative urge. The magazine ran articles on the region's Native American cultures and its recent cultural achievements, advancing Santa Fe's image as a place where the American past flowed effortlessly into a living regional culture.<sup>104</sup>

Although Hewett was central to the emergence of the Santa Fe Style, it was only one part of the work of the age that he took on. He frequently traveled to Washington D.C. on AIA business and to Mexico to oversee archaeological work. Hewett's institution-building talents and wide pale of interests even gave him a career in Southern California, and for many years it paralleled the one he built for himself in New Mexico. Between 1915 and 1928 he spent several months of each year in San Diego, where he directed that city's Museum of Man and held a professorship of anthropology at San Diego State College. Thus while Hewett's administrative role in advancing the Santa Fe Style was unique, the spacious modernity of the life in which that role was embedded was not unique; it was in fact typical of the lives of the style's signal contributors.

### **Frank Springer: Harnessing frontier capitalism to the Santa Fe Style**

Anyone looking for the controlling hand of wealth behind the Santa Fe Style would sooner or later come across Hewett's friend and patron, Frank Springer. Hewett's accomplishments would not have been possible without the support of Springer, the shrewd and wealthy lawyer who personified the frontier capitalism of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century New Mexico. Springer, reputedly the only person to whom the strong-willed Hewett habitually deferred, often

provided financial support when Hewett's plans needed it. He provided the political support of a wealthy political insider when that was needed. He was thus the strongest link between the region's moneyed elite and style's institutional matrix. However, while Springer may have personified frontier capitalism, he cannot be viewed in simple functionalist terms, that is, as capital's instrument with regard to Santa Fe Style. Like others whose lives have been examined here, his role in advancing the style was part of his own very personal project of self-construction, and Springer's project owed as much to his avocational interests as to his place in the edifice of regional capitalism he helped build.

Born in 1847, Springer was the oldest of the seven examined individuals. He grew up in rural Iowa when it was still frontier country and studied at the state university when it was still new.<sup>105</sup> In 1873, with a fresh law degree in hand, he set out for the West, more precisely, for still-wild northeastern New Mexico, where he had been engaged to provide local legal services for the Dutch investment consortium that controlled the Maxwell Trust, a vast tract of land that had devolved from a Spanish land grant. Springer faithfully advanced the consortium's interests in the legally clouded tract, sometimes deploying force and taking other questionable measures against small farmers and ranchers who occupied land claimed by the consortium. Springer's work for the Dutch investors over many years brought him wealth, which he enhanced through ranching, land speculation, and other forms of investing.

Springer's rise made him part of the regional elite and drew him into public affairs in Las Vegas, the local seat of the Maxwell Trust and the largest city in northeastern New Mexico. The territorial government appointed him to head the board of the newly founded New Mexico Normal College in Las Vegas, and it was Springer who hired Edgar Hewett to head the school. Like Hewett, Springer had hunted for Native American artifacts in the fields around his boyhood home, and the boyish diversion matured into a disciplined enthusiasm for Native American cultures in Springer as well as Hewett. This shared enthusiasm brought the two men into a friendship as well as a close alliance in college matters; Springer was a strong supporter of Hewett's innovative Native-American-arts-based curriculum.

With Hewett's return to New Mexico in 1907 to assume his important new positions, the two men renewed their friendship and Springer renewed his role as Hewett's backer. Hewett's return also intensified Springer's interest in the Native American past; he participated in the field school's digs, sometimes throwing himself into the physical labor alongside Hewett and the students. Springer's wealth and statewide influence now made him an even more formidable backer for Hewett, and as Hewett's interest expanded to include the entire cultural project underway in the region, Springer's backing did as well. His political support protected Hewett and the museum from the vagaries of territorial (and then state) politics. His financial support allowed Hewett's museum and field school to underwrite several significant contributions to the Santa Fe Style, including Carlos Vierra's photo documentation of Santa Fe's indigenous architecture; the work of painter and Native American scholar, Kenneth Chapman; and that of the archaeologist Jessie Nussbaum.<sup>106</sup> Springer also supported several of the early steps in the development of a modern regional architecture.

Ironically, the personal fortune that made Springer such a force in Santa Fe's cultural project also drew him away from it. Springer's boyhood interest in natural history paralleled his interest in Native American lore, and the former also matured into a disciplined scientific passion, one that focused on crinoids, a class of small marine animals whose fossils he had collected as a boy in Iowa. Throughout his adult life, Springer expanded his fossil collection and used it to work out a definitive crinoid taxonomy. Springer eventually donated his collection to the National Museum in Washington, D.C. and took an apartment in the city so he could continue his taxonomic work on the collection. The publication of his completed taxonomy, a major work, brought him national

renown as a naturalist and drew him into the era's great debate about Darwinian evolution. (He was a skeptic.) Springer maintained his interest in the Santa Fe project as he grew older, but it faced ever-greater competition from this other part of the work of the age that he had taken on.

Several conclusions might be drawn from Springer's life. First, it showed that even those near the privileged heart of the capitalist order were not above the project of the self or immune to the tugs of the work of the age. Springer's life also showed that wealth and power gave individuals special freedom and effectiveness when they took up these intertwined personal and social tasks. Finally, it showed that the relationship between the era's capitalism and Santa Fe's cultural ferment had a mutually beneficial reticulate quality. While the Santa Fe Style served the ends of capitalism by opening up new frontiers for profit opportunities and dampening discontents, Springer's life illustrated how the cultural project that created the Santa Fe Style accessed capitalism's privileged circles and drew the resources it needed from them.

## **Conclusion**

Examining the lives of key individuals in the formation of the Santa Fe Style has illuminated the contours of reflexive regionalism as it operated in Santa Fe and the surrounding Upper Rio Grande region. The lives of those individuals also illuminated the scope of personal and social challenges on which that regionalism was built. The seven lives do not span the full breadth of participation in the project, however, nor do they reveal all roles on which the project was built. It was the work of hundreds of individuals who contributed to it as painters, writers, curators, journalists, designers, craftspeople, business people, decorators, collectors, and in many other roles. In this breadth of participation, the Santa Fe Style was likely as demotic as the regional cultures of the folklorists. Most of those who made significant contributions to the style were unlike the creators of the older regional cultures in their degree of contact and depth of experience with the wider world, however. That wider world raised them, educated them, sent them to the region, and remained a point of reference for their creative endeavors or other work in advancing the style. Consequently, breadth of knowing reference is among the style's foremost characteristics. This defiance of what we expect of regional cultures has made it difficult to take the full measure of the Santa Fe Style as a creative achievement as well as to discern the reflexive regionalism that drove it. We would expect such worldliness in a large, modern cultural project, however, if we assume that it will be deeply intertwined with the era's capitalism. As we saw, it was precisely the worldliness of the Santa Fe project that made it such a useful complement to a capitalism that was itself worldly, needed a worldly host society, and created worldly participants.

In the case of the Santa Fe Style, the demands and challenges of modern capitalism led to something rich and profound because they stimulated a high degree of creativity in individuals. Capitalism, expressing itself as a market for art that visually articulated the challenges of the industrial era, drove and disciplined the personal creativity of the New Mexico artists. Manifesting itself as a market for an aesthetic style that responded to the needs and anxieties of the new middle class, capitalism stoked the talents of Mary Colter and the others who created the crafts dimension of the Santa Fe Style. The book market, responding to the nation's discomfort over the loss of the softer virtues of rural and small-town life, gave rise to the Santa Fe Style's literary dimension.

In responding to industrial capitalism, Santa Fe's reflexive regionalism thus prompted a great variety of personal creative impulses, which produced a style that was as original and spacious as the lives of its foremost creators. It also produced a style that was capable of fitting into peoples' lives without rupturing their psychic or economic ties with the wider world. This allowed the style to meet the needs of people operating within the ambit of modern capitalism; hence it met the needs of modern capitalism itself.



This conclusion forces a final question on us. Can contemporary America host the kind of vigorously creative and personally meaningful regionalism that produced the Santa Fe Style? Today's Santa Fe is not encouraging. The city and its region have become a node of highly aestheticized consumption. As Patricia Brown quipped, John Meem made Santa Fe safe for Ralph Lauren.<sup>107</sup> While the Santa Fe Style can still garner admiration, the conventions on which it built seem dated, the tropes threadbare. The portrayal of the region's Hispanics and Native Americans as noble innocents, for example, lost much of its power when more of them found their voices and insisted that they never were such beings. Some challenges to which the style responded no longer seem very pressing. Long ago the elite cast off the Victorian self-repression that the style responded to, for example. On the other hand, some of the challenges to which it responded now seem too great for the solutions that the style once offered. For example, a few crafted artifacts no longer seem capable of providing sufficient warmth in a cool world or of making for tasteful living in a tasteless one.

With so many of its referents no longer vital, the Santa Fe Style no longer seems capable of pushing back against the commercialization that has always accompanied it. The style has become formalized and glossy under the imperatives of a commerce that now seems to dominate and define it. So rendered, the style hangs heavy on the city and weighs down its spirit. Moreover, aestheticized consumption in Santa Fe has leapt past the city's eponymous style; expensive baubles of every conceivable cultural provenance—Italian clothing, African textiles, Japanese porcelain, and rare European books, to name but a few—threaten the style's privileges in the city as they crowd into its shops and galleries.<sup>108</sup> It is hard to imagine today's intensely commercialized Santa Fe inspiring the genius of a contemporary Meem, Colter, or Blumenschein.

Nor at first glance does the today's capitalism seem to offer much cause for optimism about individual creative potential. Hochschild has noted how consumer capitalism seems intent on forcing itself ever deeper into our interior lives and rearranging what it finds there for its own benefit.<sup>109</sup> It would not welcome threats to its plans for us. On the other hand, the project of the self remains alive in the lifestyle choices, experiments with identity, and personal narrative options that Giddens identifies as hallmarks of contemporary life.<sup>110</sup> Moreover, Hochschild shows that many people perceive and resent profit-driven attempts to colonize their inner lives. Such resentment can be a powerful creative stimulus; resentment, sometimes of a very personal kind, over the impact of industrial capitalism provided creative fuel for the Santa Fe Style a century ago. Perhaps more Americans will seek out places where the prospects for pushing back this frontier of inner colonization seem bright. And perhaps they will enhance these places with reflexive cultural invention of the sort that Santa Fe and its region saw in the past, invention that links the project of the self with the work of the age.

Reflexive regionalism is unlikely to take exactly the same forms today as it did in Santa Fe a century ago. As noted, many of the broader challenges to which the Santa Fe Style responded have lost their sharp edge; many of its expressive forms seem dated. But new problems and challenges have certainly sprung up to give us the work of our age. Some have arisen from the long operation of established accumulation strategies, some from the newer strategies of a more globalized and technology-enhanced capitalism. Environmental problems will undoubtedly loom larger in any contemporary reflexive regionalism, as will lifeway challenges posed by new technologies and by new uses of labor in more internationalized and finance-dominated production settings.

Perhaps places like Boise, Idaho; Asheville, North Carolina; Bozeman, Montana; Chattanooga, Tennessee; and Charleston, South Carolina, and their surrounding regions offer the most obvious prospects for contemporary reflexive regionalism. They all have a strong sense of their history, of their physical setting, and their uniqueness as communities, but each also has a

worldly spirit; many of their inhabitants, often from elsewhere, are in touch with the wider world and perceive its challenges. In other words, such places appear to have the resources for reflexive regionalism, much as Santa Fe once did. Perhaps the energy that emanates from these places today comes from reflexive regional projects getting underway.

Any cultural invention occurring in these places will be intertwined with capitalism from the beginning, to be sure, but so it was in Santa Fe. The real danger is not capitalism per se, but its more culturally destructive manifestations. There is the danger, for example, that incipient place-based cultural initiatives will immediately be overwhelmed by commercialization and place promotion that are more alert than ever to the opportunities that lay in cultural uniqueness. In other words, instead of supporting creativity, as commercial interests did in the early days of the Santa Fe Style, there is the danger that they will smother it at birth. If such initiatives do escape this fate and begin to develop into rich and deep reflexive cultures in a few favored places, they face the danger of becoming exclusive, their bounty available only to those who can withstand the consequent rise in land prices and then the ensuing design codes and growth-management initiatives that further raise land prices--what happened in Santa Fe.

One possible approach to countering these threats is to encourage reflexive regionalism wherever it shows signs of creating place-based responses to the challenges that contemporary Americans face. Such encouragement might be incorporated into the livable-city initiatives now underway in so many places. The aim should be to foment as many reflexive regional projects as possible. In this way they might become common, and their fruits widely available instead of rare, precious, and intensely commodified. All cities and regions are unique in their histories, identities, and settings. Perhaps in that uniqueness, many places, including not particularly prepossessing ones, can find the resources on which a reflexive regionalism builds. After all, what part of America seemed less in possession of useful cultural resources in 1848 than the Upper Rio Grande region? If this is so, if such useful resources are in fact widely available, perhaps the kind of reflexive regionalism that once created the Santa Fe Style will give a spirit-sustaining cultural richness to many, perhaps even most, of the places where we lead our lives.

## NOTES

- 1 The term "cultural" is used here both in the sense of an aesthetic signature, especially in reference to a social elite, and in the more anthropological sense of lifeways and their accouterments. The Santa Fe Style mixed the two to such an extent that it eroded much of the distinction. For the various meanings of the term "culture," especially with reference to art and other forms of creative activity in the American Southwest, see M. Mullin, *Culture in the Marketplace: Gender, Art, and Value in the American Southwest* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001), especially Chapter 1, "Culture and Cultures."
- 2 C. Mather and S. Woods, *Santa Fe Style* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1986); H. Dent, *The Feast of Santa Fe* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985); C. Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997); L. Powell, *Southwest Classics: The Creative Literature of the Arid Lands: Essays on the Books and their Writers* (Los Angeles: The Ward Ritchie Press, 1974); C. Sheppard, *Creator of the Santa Fe Style: Isaac Hamilton Rapp, Architect* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988).
- 3 U. Hannerz, "Cosmopolitans and Locals in World Culture," *Theory, Culture, and Society* 7 (1990): 237-51, specific reference from 237; A. King, "Architecture, Capital and the Globalization of Culture," *Theory, Culture, and Society* 7 (1990): 397-411, specific reference from 399; R. Robertson, "Globalization Theory and Civilizational Analysis," *Comparative Civilizations Review* 17 (1987): 20-30; A. Smith, "Toward a Global Culture?" *Theory, Culture,*

- and Society* 7 (1990): 171-91, specific reference from 171; J. Entrikin, *Betweenness of Place: Towards a Geography of Modernity* (Houndsmills, Hampshire, UK: Macmillan 1991), 31; R. Peet, "World Capitalism and the Destruction of Regional Cultures," in *A World in Crisis? Geographical Perspectives, Second Edition*, eds. R. Johnston and P. Taylor (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 175-99, specific reference from 175-76.
- 4 A. Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1991), 2; A. Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 49; L. Wirth, "The Limitations of Regionalism," in *Regionalism in America*, ed. M. Jensen (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965), 381-93.
  - 5 Wilson, *Myth of Santa Fe*; H. Tobias and C. Woodhouse, *Santa Fe: A Modern History, 1880-1990* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001).
  - 6 Mather and Woods, *Santa Fe Style*, 8.
  - 7 B. Allen, "Regional Studies in American Folklore Scholarship," in *Sense of Place: American Regional Cultures*, eds. B. Allen and T. Schlereth (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1990), 1-13; A. Green, "Reflexive Regionalism," *Adena, a Journal of the History and Culture of the Ohio* 3, no. 2 (1978): 3-15.
  - 8 E. Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London, Pion, 1976), 117.
  - 9 I. Wallerstein, "Culture as the Ideological Battleground of the Modern World-System," *Theory, Culture, and Society* 7 (1990): 31-55.
  - 10 W. Johnson, "The Santa Fe of the Future," *El Palacio* 3, no. 3 (1916): 11-27 plus following unpaginated illustrations; E. Hewett, "Recent Southwestern Art," *Art and Archaeology* 9, no. 11 (1920): 31-32 plus following unpaginated illustrations.
  - 11 S. Brand, *How Buildings Learn: What Happens After They're Built* (New York: Viking, 1994), 142.
  - 12 S. A. Lukas, ed., *The Themed Space: Locating Culture, Nation, and Self* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007).
  - 13 L. Logan, "The Geographical Imagination of Frederic Remington: The Invention of the Cowboy West," *Journal of Historical Geography* 18, no. 1 (1992): 75-90; J. Allen, "Horizons of the Sublime: The Invention of the Romantic West," *op. cit.*: 27-40; D. Fowler, *A Laboratory for Anthropology: Science and Romanticism in the American Southwest, 1846-1930* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000), viii.
  - 14 Wilson, *Myth of Santa Fe*, "Chapter Three: The Reluctant Tourist Town"; Tobias and Woodhouse, *Santa Fe*, "Chapter Five: The City Becomes 'Different': Preservation, Style, and Tourism."
  - 15 See J. Urry, *The Tourist Gaze* (New York: Sage Publications, 1990).
  - 16 L. Rudnick, *Cady Wells and Southwestern Modernism* (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 2009); *The Suppressed Memoirs of Mabel Dodge Luhan: Sex, Syphilis, and Psychoanalysis in the Making of Modern American Culture* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2012); F. Burke, *From Greenwich Village to Taos: Primitivism and Place at Mabel Dodge Luhan's* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2008); Kate Wingart-Playdon, *John Gaw Meem at Acoma: The Restoration of San Esteban del Rey Mission* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2012); L. Cline, *Literary Pilgrims: The Santa Fe and Taos Writers' Colonies 1917-1950* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007); M. Redding and K. Eldrick, eds., *Through the Lens: Creating Santa Fe* (Santa Fe: Museum of Santa Fe Press, 2008); M. Booker, *The Santa Fe House: Historic Residences, Enchanting Adobes, and Romantic Revivals* (New York: Rizzoli, 2009); R. Larson and C. Larson, *Ernest L. Blumenschein: The Life of an American Artist* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012).

- 17 See for example, the "Origins of the Santa Fe Style," *Canyon Road Arts Visitor Guide to Arts, Dining, and the Santa Fe Lifestyle* (Internet, accessed Feb. 1, 2014.) Guide sponsored by Medicine Man Gallery.
- 18 Green, "Reflexive Regionalism," 5.
- 19 R. Boyer, *The Regulation School: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 34.
- 20 M. Aglietta, *A Theory of Capitalist Regulation: The American Experience* (London: New Left Books, 1979), originally published as *Regulation et Crises du Capitalisme*, (Paris: Calmann-Levy, 1976) is the seminal exposition of Regulation Theory. Also see the later and wide-ranging R. Boyer and Y. Saillard, eds., *Regulation Theory: The State of the Art* (London: Routledge, 2002).
- 21 See for example, M. Lauria, *Reconstructing Urban Regime Theory: Regulating Urban Politics in a Global Economy* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1997).
- 22 L. Mumford, *Culture of Cities*, 313-14, cited in Entrikin, *Betweenness of Place*, 79-80; J. Hirsch, "Folklore in the Making: B. Botkin," *Journal of American Folklore* 100 (1987): 3-38. See S. Stern and J. Cicala, eds., *Creative Ethnicity: Symbols and Strategies of Contemporary Ethnic Life* (Logan: University of Utah Press, 1991).
- 23 See, for example, M. Redding, "Imagining Place" in *Through the Lens*, eds. M. Redding and K. Eldrick 45-66; R. Larson and C. Larson, *Ernest L. Blumenschein*; L. Rudnick, "And La Bruja Brought the Sunflowers," *El Palacio* (Summer 2012): 34-41.
- 24 A. Bryman, "The Disneyization of Society," *The Sociological Review* 47, no. 1 (1999): 25-47.
- 25 A. Gibson, *The Santa Fe and Taos Colonies: The Age of the Muses, 1900-1942* (Norman: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1983), 271; Tobias and Woodhouse, *Santa Fe*, 99.
- 26 R. Jarrell, *A Sad Heart at the Supermarket: Essays and Fables* (New York: Athenaeum, 1962); C. Mills, *White Collar: The American Middle Classes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951); W. Whyte, *The Organization Man* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1956); E. Fromm, *Sane Society* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976); H. Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958); H. Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964); Also see V. Packard, *The Hidden Persuaders* (New York: Pocket Books, (1980 [1957])).
- 27 U. Hannerz, "Cosmopolitans and Locals"; M. Featherstone, *Consumer Culture and Postmodernism* (London: Sage, 1991); A. Pred and M. Watts, *Reworking Modernity: Capitalisms and Symbolic Discontent* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992); P. Wexler, "Structure, Text, and Subject: A Critical Sociology School of Knowledge," in *Culture and Economic Reproduction in Education*, ed. M. Apple (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982), 181-201.
- 28 O. Zunz, *Making America Corporate: 1870-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990); C. Aron, *Ladies and Gentlemen of the Civil Service: Middle Class Workers in Victorian America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), especially 187; S. Warner, *Streetcar Suburbs* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962); K. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of The United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).
- 29 P. Horgan, *Great River: The Rio Grande in North American History* (New York: Rinehart, 1954).
- 30 S. Forrest, *The Preservation of the Village: New Mexico's Hispanics and the New Deal* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1989), 2.
- 31 R. Brown, *Historical Geography of the United States* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1948), 389.
- 32 J. Bloom, "New Mexico Viewed by Americans, 1846-1849," *New Mexico Historical Review* 24, no. 3 (1969): 165-78.



- 33 Brown, *Historical Geography*, 389.
- 34 Bloom, "New Mexico," 169.
- 35 Quoted in R. Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 239.
- 36 N. Veregge, "Transformations of Spanish Urban Landscapes in the American Southwest, 1821-1990," *Journal of the Southwest* 34, no. 4 (1993): 385-459, specific reference from 397-98.
- 37 Tobias and Woodhouse, *Santa Fe*, Chapter Two.
- 38 E. Logue, "The Idea of America is Choice," in *Qualities of Life*, eds. Commission on Critical Choices for Americans (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1976), 1-51.
- 39 M. Diamond, "The American Idea of Man: The View from the Founding," in *The Americans*, 1976, eds. I. Kristol and P. Weaver (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1976), 1-24.
- 40 R. Wiebe, *The Search for Order: 1877-1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), 2.
- 41 *Ibid.*, 45-46.
- 42 Quoted in Hirsch, "Folklore in the Making," 16.
- 43 Wiebe, *Search for Order*, 47.
- 44 Zunz, *Making America Corporate*.
- 45 C. Lasch, "The Moral and Intellectual Rehabilitation of the Ruling Class," in his *The World of Nations: Reflections on American History, Politics, and Culture* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1973), 80-99, specific reference from 97.
- 46 C. Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 458, writes of the widespread efforts by intellectuals under the sway of Romantic ideals to "integrate Romantic notions of personal fulfillment into the private lives of the denizens of a civilization run more and more by the canons of instrumental reason."
- 47 D. Livingstone, *Nathaniel Southgate Shaler and the Culture of American Science* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1987), 16-17. Also see S. Persons, *Free Religion: An American Faith* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1963).
- 48 E. Bellamy, *Looking Backward, 2000-1887* (Peterborough, Ont., Broadview Press, 2003 [1888]). More generally, see J. Thomas, *Alternative America: Henry George, Edward Bellamy, Henry Demarest Lloyd and the Adversary Tradition* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1983), especially Chapter Ten.
- 49 W. Lippmann, *Drift and Mastery: An Attempt to Diagnose the Current Unrest* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1961 [1914]); S. Nearing, *Social Sanity: A Preface to the Book of Social Progress* (New York: Moffat, Yard, 1913), held that the work of creating a society ruled by reason in the service of the commonweal was a great communion that would imbue its participants with personal meaning and a transcendent sense of self.
- 50 D. Seidman, *The New Republic: A Voice of Modern Liberalism* (New York, Praeger, 1986), 7; T. Donovan, *Henry Adams and Brooks Adams: The Education of Two American Historians* (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), 163; P. Rego, *American Ideal: Theodore Roosevelt's Search for American Individualism* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books: 2008).
- 51 T. J. Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture: 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon, 1981); Wiebe, *Search For Order*.
- 52 Quoted in Donovan, *Henry Adams*, 162-63.
- 53 R. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1957); Hannerz, "Cosmopolitans and Locals."
- 54 The impacts of this developing style were many and sometimes profound. The style changed the economic lives of many indigenes by drawing them in as craftspeople and assigning market value to their output. As Hoerig, observed, the market for their crafts

reconfigured social relationships of many of the region's native inhabitants and encouraged new social networks and communities to emerge among them: K. Hoerig, *Under the Palace Portal: Native American Artists in Santa Fe* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003) 131-46. The preferences of the market, of those who controlled access to the market, and of prize-awarding panels also influenced those forms and styles of indigenous cultural expression. (Hoerig, *op. cit.*, 46, especially notes the pressure that patrons put on the artists to reproduce prehistoric--hence "authentic"-- designs in their work.). As Swentzell noted, the constant presence of images of themselves produced by outsiders, and respected outsiders at that, had a distorting effect on the views of themselves held by the region's indigenous inhabitants: R. Swentzell, "Anglo Artists and the Creation of Pueblo Worlds," in *The Culture of Tourism, the Tourism of Culture*, ed. H. Rothman (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003). Rodriguez also discusses the psychological impact that interacting with the outside artists and their works had on the region's native inhabitants: S. Rodriguez, "The Tourist Gaze, Gentrification, and the Commodification of Subjectivity in Taos," in *Essays on the Changing Images of the Southwest*, eds. R. Francaviglia and D. Narrett (College Station: Texas A&M Press, 1994), 105-126.

- 55 For the lives and culture of the Hispanics of the Upper Rio Grande region during the late nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, see S. Deutsch, *No Separate Refuge: Culture, Class, and Gender on an Anglo-Hispanic Frontier in the American Southwest, 1880-1940* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); R. Nostrand, "The Highland-Hispano Homeland," in *Homelands: A Geography of Culture and Place Across America*, eds. R. Nostrand and L. Estaville (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 155-67; J. Smith, "Cultural Landscape Change in a Hispanic Region," in *Geographical Identities of Ethnic America: Race, Space, and Place*, eds. K. Berry and M. Henderson (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2002), 174-200. Thickening connections with the rest of America and its capitalist economy mostly brought economic hardship to the old communities of the Upper Rio Grande Valley. On this point, see especially Deutsch, *op. cit.*, and Forrest, *op. cit.*, especially Chapters One and Two.
- 56 Hirsch, "Folklore in the Making," 21.
- 57 Unless otherwise noted, the events of Lummis' life are from M. Thompson, *American Character: The Curious Life of Charles Fletcher Lummis and the Rediscovery of the Southwest* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2001).
- 58 J. Higham, *Writing American History: Essays on Modern Scholarship* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1970), 33.
- 59 C. Lummis, *A New Mexico David* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891); *The Land of Poco Tiempo* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933 [1893]); *The Enchanted Burro* (Chicago: Way and Williams, 1897). For the discontent and weariness with progress, see Higham, *Writing American History*, 79.
- 60 Cline, *Literary Pilgrims*, 15. Lummis' books were preceded by a few works that took a more positive view of the Southwest. These included Samuel Woodworth Cozzens, *The Marvelous Country, [etc.]* (London: S. Low, Marston, Low, and Searle, 1875), which tapped the romantic landscape aesthetic in an appreciation of fantastical natural forms found in the Southwest. Articles were beginning to appear in national magazines that romanticized the ruins of ancient Native American cliff dwellings, and the cliff dwellers themselves. The ethnographer Frank Cushing, whose close scrutiny of the lives of the Native Americans of the Southwest led him to a sympathetic view of his subjects, was also beginning to change the educated view of the region's inhabitants. For more on the changing perspective, see R. Francaviglia, "Elusive Land: Changing Geographic Images of the Southwest," in *Essays on The Changing Images of the Southwest*, eds. R. Francaviglia and Narrett, 8-39. See also Wilson, *Myth of Santa Fe*, Chapter Three.

- 61 W. Cather, *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (New York: Knopf, 1927); M. Austin, *Land of Journey's Ending* (New York: Century, 1924); M. Luhan, *Edge of Taos Desert: An Escape to Reality* (New York: Harcourt, 1937); *Winter in Taos* (New York: Harcourt, 1935); H. Long, *Pinon Country* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pierce, 1941); *The Power Within Us: Cabeza de Vaca's Relation of His Journey From Florida to the Pacific, 1528-1536* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pierce, 1944); J. Nichols, *The Milagro Beanfield War* (New York: Henry Holt, 1974). See Cline, *Literary Pilgrims*, for a history of the New Mexico writers.
- 62 Lummis, *Land of Poco Tempo*, 4.
- 63 Thompson, *American Character*, 171; D. Gebhard, "Architectural Imagery, the Mission, and California," *Harvard Architectural Review* 1 (1980): 137-45, specific reference from 138 to 139.
- 64 Gibson, *Santa Fe and Taos*, xi, 6, 270-71.
- 65 Unless otherwise noted, the events in Blumenschein's life are from Larson and Larson, *Ernest L. Blumenschein*; and Mark Sublett/Medicine Man Gallery, *Ernest Blumenschein (1874-1960)*, on-line biography [nd].
- 66 Larson and Larson, *Ernest L. Blumenschein*, 189-90, wrote that the professional and personal choices of many artists of Blumenschein's circle were driven by their "disillusionment with industrialization [and] alienation from the values of a money-dominated middle-class America."
- 67 With their celebration of these qualities in the region's Native Americans, Blumenschein and his fellow artists were also responding to an older and more widely shared European cultural trope, namely the Romantic perspective on Western civilization itself, which reached educated Americans through many channels, including the work of the English and continental Romantic painters and the poetry of Wordsworth, Coleridge, and other English Romantic poets. As Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 456-57, wrote, "For the Romantics, the counterweight to the world deformed by mechanism and the utilitarian stance was the real world of nature and undistorted human feeling." Taylor noted that the Romantics' search for this undistorted human feeling and "the spiritual reality behind it," took them the countryside and placed them among its simple folk. Resonance with this older and more general Western trope could have only increased the appeal of the work of the New Mexico artists.
- 68 Gibson, *Santa Fe and Taos*, 5, 27.
- 69 The regional iconography's shared characteristics with the era's larger pictorial project also made it easy for talented sojourners to contribute to the region's artistic florescence. John Sloan and Robert Henri, leading members of New York's Ash Can School of urban-realist painting, were among those whose productive stays in Santa Fe enriched the region's iconography. See G. Holcomb, "John Sloan in Santa Fe," *American Art Journal* 10, no. 1 (1978): 33-54.
- 70 See Larson and Larson, *Ernest L. Blumenschein*, especially Chapter Twelve. They note (189-90) that the formation of art colonies in remote places in the early twentieth century was encouraged by the growth of "the belief that in a setting of unspoiled nature, writers and artists living near one other could create an environment conducive to the full flowering of individual talent." Their formation was also encouraged, they note, by a decline in illustrating work available in New York and a similarly steep decline in demand for portraiture in large urban centers.
- 71 Gibson, *Santa Fe and Taos*, 63.
- 72 *Ibid.*, 81.
- 73 *Ibid.*, 61.

- 74 S. Rodriguez, "Art, Tourism, and Race Relations in Taos: Toward a Sociology of the Art Colony," *Journal of Anthropological Research*, 45, no. 1 (1989): 77-100. Forrest, *Preservation of the Village*, 11-12, notes that census of 1930 and other studies of that decade found that Hispanics of the Upper Rio Grande region, with modest land holdings, meager farm and farm-labor earnings, and often ensnared in debt peonage, were among the poorest Americans.
- 75 The events in Colter's life are from A. Berke, *Mary Colter: Architect of the Southwest* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2002).
- 76 L. Lambourne, *Utopian Craftsmen: Utopian Craftsmen: The Arts and Crafts Movement from the Cotswolds to Chicago* (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, 1980).
- 77 Ibid.; Lears, *No Place of Grace*.
- 78 Gebhard, "Architectural Imagery."
- 79 Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 458.
- 80 Ibid., 457; J. Kasson, *Rudeness and Civility: Manners in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1990), notes that the middle class, still uncertain of its place in society, felt compelled to tame its environment and banish threats, real and symbolic, to its status. It did so in part with an increasing rigidity and formality of behavior in everyday life.
- 81 S. D'Emilio and S. Campbell, *Visions and Visionaries: The Art and Artists of the Santa Fe Railroad* (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, 1991), 8-9. William Haskell Simpson, the head of advertising for the Santa Fe Railroad in the early decades of the twentieth century, was a discerning art collector who formed close, amicable relationships with many of the region's artists. He often purchased their paintings for display in the company's offices and he arranged for free rail passage for the region's artists to encourage them to produce images that promoted the region. For extended treatments of the relationship between the Santa Fe Railroad and the artists, see Ibid. Also see M. Weigle and Barbara Babcock, eds., *The Great Southwest of the Fred Harvey Company and the Santa Fe Railway* (Phoenix: The Heard Museum, 1996).
- 82 Berke, *Mary Colter*, 49.
- 83 Tobias and Woodhouse, *Santa Fe*, 117; Cline, *Literary Pilgrims*, 16
- 84 Berke, *Mary Colter*, 271.
- 85 Artists began moving into old adobe houses and adopting them to their needs early in the twentieth century. In Albuquerque in the first decade of the century, the University of New Mexico's President William Tight helped design and construct several buildings on the Albuquerque campus that drew inspiration from Native American structures. In Santa Fe, Carlos Vierra experimented with pueblo-inspired forms in the construction of his residence a decade later. Isaac Rapp was designing similarly inspired commercial buildings. For a fuller account of the style that Meem brought to perfection, see Chris Wilson, "Spanish Pueblo Revival." Unless otherwise noted, B. Bunting, *John Gaw Meem: Southwestern Architect* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983); and C. Wilson, *Facing Southwest: The Life and Houses of John Gaw Meem* (New York: W. W. Norton Company, 2001) are the source for the events in Meem's life.
- 86 P. Brown, "Visionary Who Looked Back and Saw Santa Fe," *The New York Times*, January 9 (1992): 1. Its organic associations were an important source of adobe's appeal to refugees and sojourners from an industrializing America. They allowed the material to make anti-modern and anti-industrial statements that complemented those of the Arts and Crafts Movement. Gibson, *Santa Fe and Taos*, 89, wrote that for the artists and intellectuals gathering in the region, adobe also symbolized "the irrefutable progression of life--born from the earth mother, sustained by her during life, and returning to her at death."



- 87 See C. Wilson, *Facing Southwest*.
- 88 Brown, "Visionary Who Looked Back."
- 89 J. G. Meem, "Old Forms for New Buildings," *American Architect*, November (1934): 10-21.
- 90 Lasch, "Moral and Intellectual Rehabilitation."
- 91 M. White, *Social Thought in America: The Revolt Against Formalism* (New York: Viking, 1949).
- 92 Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 457, wrote of the "collusive relationship that develops between the bourgeoisie and the [artistic] avant-garde." The relationship, he wrote, opens up the creative imagination, which is, "an indispensable part of spiritual nourishment—even for those who staff the world of power and commerce."
- 93 The events in Luhan's life are from E. Hahan, *Mabel: A Biography of Mabel Dodge Luhan* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1977), and Rudnick, *Suppressed Memoirs*.
- 94 L. Rudnick, Introduction to Mabel Dodge Luhan, *Edge of Taos Desert: Escape to Reality* (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 1987 [1937]), vii.
- 95 Cline, *Literary Pilgrims*, 85.
- 96 Powell, *Southwest Classics*, 77.
- 97 See Mullin, *Culture in the Marketplace*, for the role women played in creating and advancing the Santa Fe Style. Mullin notes that a powerful network of independent Anglo women (for whom independence usually included freedom from male household domination) formed in the Upper Rio Grande region in the 1920s. Its numerous members were usually from elsewhere and well educated, and many were wealthy. One of its participants referred to the network as the "City of Ladies," (Ibid., 4).
- 98 Unless otherwise noted, the events in Hewett's life are from B. Chauvenet, *Hewett and Friends: A Biography of Santa Fe's Vibrant Era* (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 1983).
- 99 R. Thompson, "Edgar Lee Hewett and the Political Process: The Antiquities Alliance," *National Park Service Archaeology Program*. Internet, updated March 3, 2014.
- 100 Fowler, *Laboratory for Anthropology*, 100.
- 101 J. Brody, *Indian Painters and White Patrons* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1971), 67; K. Chapman, Secretary of Region 13 PWAP, interviewed by Mrs. Sylvia Loomis, December 5, 1963. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, roll no. 3418.
- 102 *El Palacio* 10, no. 5 (1921); "Art Policy of Museum and School," 2-3.
- 103 *Wikipedia*, entry for Edgar Lee Hewett (revised 27 Sept. 2009). Rudnick, "And La Bruja Brought the Sunflowers," discusses the costs to the indigenes of this sort of arts guidance and support.
- 104 For examples from *Art and Archaeology*, see M. Hartley, "Red Men Ceremonials: An American Plea for American Esthetics," 9, no. 1 (1920): 7-14; "The Scientific Esthetic of the Redman," 13, no. 3 (1922): 113-119; K. Chapman, "Life Forms in Pueblo Pottery Decoration," 13, no. 3 (1922): 120-23; P. Walter, "Santa Fe-Taos Art Movement," 4, no. 6, (1916): 330-340; K. Hewett, "Recent Southwestern Art," 9, no. 11 (1920): 31-32, plus the unpaginated illustrations that follow.
- 105 Unless otherwise noted, the events in Springer's life are from D. Caffee, *Frank Springer and New Mexico: From the Colfax County War to the Emergence of Modern Santa Fe* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2006).
- 106 For more on this work see Wilson, *Myth of Santa Fe*; Fowler, *Laboratory for Anthropology*; entries for Vierra, Chapman, and Nussbaum on *Nationmaster*, the on-line encyclopedia.
- 107 Brown, "Visionary Who Looked Back," 1.
- 108 B. Cullen, "What Has Happened to the City Different? A Santa Fe Case Study," *Papers and Proceedings of Applied Geography Conferences* 15 (1992): 75-82.

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- 109 A. Hochschild, *Commercialization of Intimate Life: Notes from Home and Work* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).
- 110 Giddens, *Modernity and Self Identity*, 5; U. Beck, A. Giddens, and S. Lash, *Reflexive Modernization: Politics, Tradition, and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order* (Cambridge UK: Polity Press, 1994), 59.

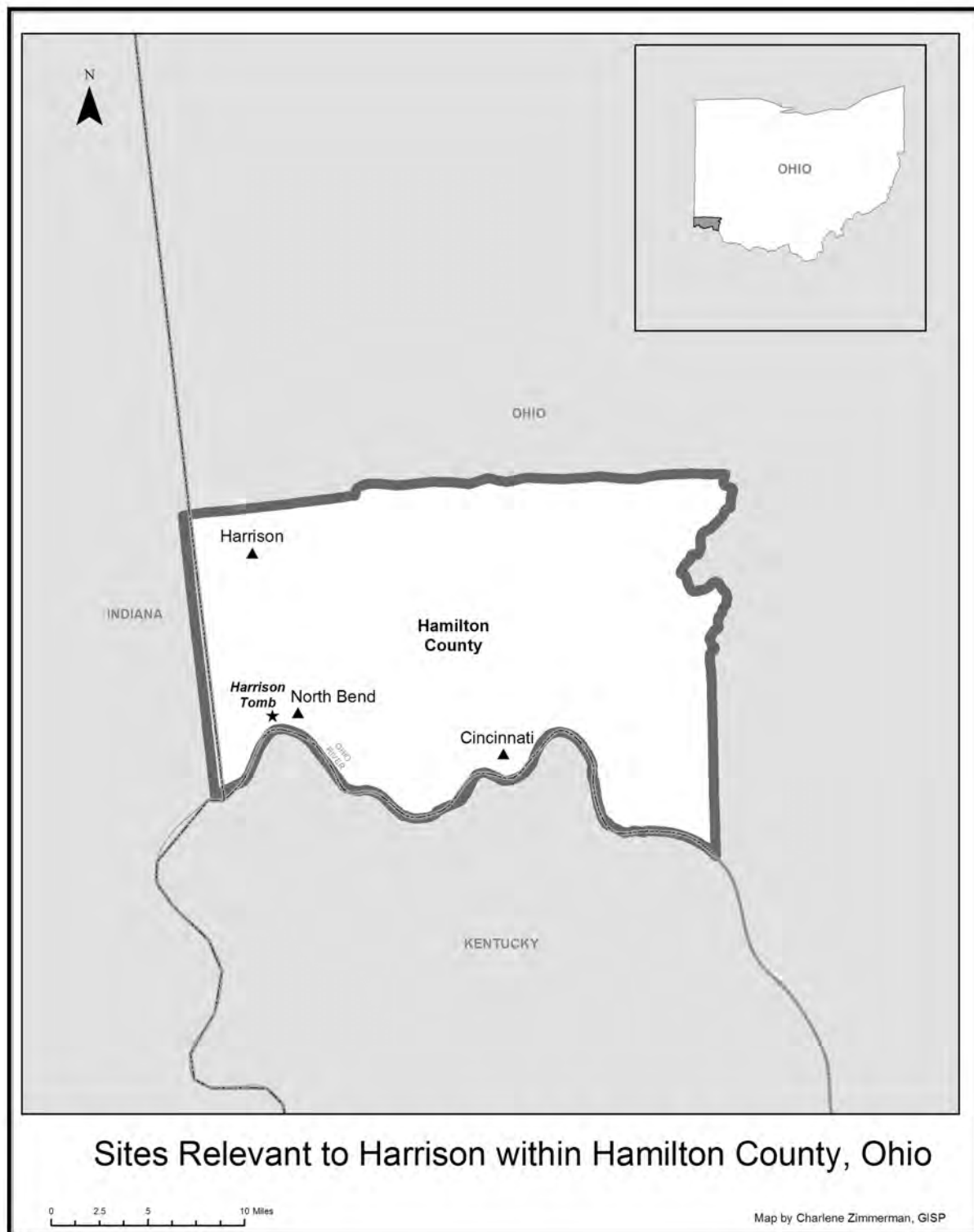
# Remembering and Forgetting an American President: A Landscape History of the Harrison Tomb

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**ABSTRACT:** In the village of North Bend, Ohio rest the remains of little-known US President William Henry Harrison. After a long and distinguished military and political career and his election as president in 1840, Harrison earned the dubious distinction of the shortest term in presidential history after falling ill and dying after just one month in office. Following his wishes, Harrison was entombed in an inconspicuous crypt on his North Bend property. For decades afterward, the Harrison Tomb suffered from neglect and vandalism, an artifact that deteriorated along with the memory of this obscure president. There were numerous proposals to preserve the tomb, but nothing materialized. Shortly after World War I, new interest in preserving history and heritage arose, and the tomb received professional preservation and a monument. However, the tomb fell into disrepair again for several more decades until the Ohio Historical Society and a local non-profit restored the grounds and added enhancements to create a park and monumental setting in the 1990s. Through a landscape history approach, this paper traces the evolution of the Harrison Tomb from an austere crypt into a memorial landscape. An historical analysis and comparison to other presidential monuments shows an inequality in the way American society remembers its prominent leaders in the cultural landscape and attendant artifacts. I demonstrate that it was the knowledge and awareness of the Harrison Tomb's landscape and material culture that provided the impetus to restore it and create a monument for President Harrison after he was essentially forgotten. I argue that, by adopting a more expansive temporal context in which to study landscapes and sites, landscape history provides another perspective on historical research that geographers are well equipped to provide and that others often overlook, which allows historical geographers to enhance and add additional dimensions to the historical record through their specialized abilities in landscape interpretation and analysis.

## William Henry *who*?

Approximately fifteen miles west and downriver from Cincinnati, in the small village of North Bend, Ohio, rest the remains of William Henry Harrison (Figure 1). Upon hearing that name, many might ask, "William Henry *who*?" And such a response is somewhat understandable, as he is not an overly familiar name to those who are not historians or history enthusiasts, though this is a regrettable thing to say about the ninth President of the United States. In fact, many rankings of presidents based on any factor (best, worst, familiarity, etc.) often omit Harrison from the list entirely, citing his presidential tenure as too brief to be considered significant (or memorable).<sup>1</sup> Much of this unfamiliarity relates to the fact that Harrison served as president for only about a month before his tragic death shortly after he took office. And it was only a matter of time before the memory of this historic military and political figure faded, both in the national narrative, and also materially through the desecration and deterioration of his burial site.



**Figure 1.** Map of Hamilton County, Ohio and study site. Map by Charlene Zimmerman.



Historian Richard Norton Smith proclaims, "Ohio is the mother lode of presidential gravesites" and, "by and large, chief executives from the Buckeye State demonstrate an inverse ratio between accomplishment in life and the lavishness with which that life is memorialized."<sup>2</sup> And while Ohio seems to be proud of its role in presidential history, it is noteworthy that the major, more recent general histories of Ohio barely even mention Harrison at all.<sup>3</sup> While there are studies that document various periods in Harrison's life and the times in which he lived, they are usually written in the context of the history of Ohio, Indiana, or the Northwest Territory, and not always specifically on the man himself.<sup>4</sup> There are also a number of biographies ranging from juvenile literature to serious scholarship, but even the number of these works is comparatively few when measured against most US presidents.<sup>5</sup> Historian Reginald Horsman explains that Harrison "has always held more interest for historians of Indiana and the Old Northwest than for those interested in the national scene. Even his election to the presidency has usually been examined more in regard to the methods the Whigs used to secure this success than in terms of Harrison's fitness for office," adding that, as a national politician, he "remains a shadowy figure."<sup>6</sup> Even more astonishing is how Harrison's biographies often abruptly end at his death, offering little, if any, analysis of the man or his legacy.

This paper shows that the limited legacy of William Henry Harrison did not end at his death and a further, significant story about him remains untold. Here, historical geography steps in where traditional historical research leaves off, as many Harrison biographers say little about what became of him after his death, instead shifting their focus to his successor, President John Tyler. This is somewhat understandable for the sake of chronology, but this paper explores how Harrison was memorialized through a landmark that was also forgotten—several times over, in fact—and how, or *if*, this artifact helped to memorialize him when he was effectively forgotten after his burial.

In this paper, I examine the evolution of the Harrison Tomb from an austere, neglected crypt into a memorial landscape. I trace the history of his burial site as a cultural landscape and how it and its condition (and meaning) changed over time. Due to the sporadic coverage of the tomb in the news over the last century and a half, and the fairly limited available sources, a fully comprehensive history of the site is difficult to construct, but I attempt to provide as complete a narrative as possible. I wish to be clear that it is not my intention to pass judgment or evaluation of Harrison, though I do want to advance my opinion that, despite his complicated biography and character, he was still a historically significant figure and that he is worthy of study despite his deceptively minor role in American history.

I begin the paper with an evaluation of the literature by geographers on monuments and memorial landscapes, a brief discussion of presidential gravesites, and introductions to the concepts of reputational politics and landscape history. The next section provides a brief biographical sketch of Harrison. While my purpose is to focus on the story behind the Harrison Tomb and the role that monument plays as a landscape feature perpetuating his legacy and memory, some detail on his life is necessary to provide information on this largely unfamiliar president. I then provide a landscape history of the Harrison Tomb, documenting how it was discovered by the public in deplorable condition, how people attempted for decades to preserve it and restore the memory of a former president, how it fell into disrepair again for many more decades, and how others stepped forward to care for it and offer Harrison the respect he deserved. I conclude with an analysis of Harrison's legacy and that of his tomb based on my research, and a call for geographers to engage further with landscape history as an additional means of demonstrating historical geography's potential to enhance the historical record.

I find that, despite his current obscurity in American history, William Henry Harrison is not an inconsequential person or president. While Harrison's biography is apparently controversial

in the sense that he was an “insignificant” president, it was the public’s interest in the landscape and artifacts that memorialize him, along with the stories behind those elements, which proved to be the impetus to preserve his legacy and gravesite. In fact, it is through a historical-geographical analysis of the public’s attention to the condition of the Harrison Tomb that we see what historical geography can add to the historical record. An assessment of the Harrison Tomb over the years demonstrates how concern with historically significant landscapes and artifacts provides a different approach to preserving heritage where traditional historical approaches (such as a controversial biography and legacy) did not prove sufficient. Landscape and material culture can serve as more than just a backdrop or context in studies of public memory, as they and the stories behind them can play a key role in helping to determine what society remembers (or forgets) in the landscape. From these points, I argue that, by adopting a more expansive temporal context in which to study landscapes and sites, landscape history provides another perspective on historical research that geographers are well equipped to provide and that others often overlook, which allows historical geographers to enhance and add additional dimensions to the historical record through their specialized abilities in landscape interpretation and analysis.

### **Memorial landscapes, reputational politics, and landscape histories**

It is first necessary to review some relevant literature and concepts, specifically in regard to memorial landscapes, reputational politics, and landscape histories. The study of monuments and memorial landscapes has gained greater popularity in geography in recent years.<sup>7</sup> These studies cover a variety of memorial landscapes including monuments, memorials, shrines, museums, and other forms of commemoration, guided by three principal concepts. First, before a site, event, cause, or figure can be commemorated, it must be deemed worthy of commemoration and have influential backing. Second, geography involves more than a physical setting for memorialization by not just reflecting, but often shaping how people perceive and interpret the past. And third, memorial landscapes are in a constant state of redefinition as political and social contexts change.<sup>8</sup>

Furthermore, geographers tend to analyze memorial landscapes through three conceptual lenses: one, the “textual” metaphor through critical analysis of the histories and ideologies that are both voiced and silenced through the landscape; two, the “performance” metaphor recognizing the bodily enactments and rituals that bring meaning to memorial landscapes; and three, the “arena” metaphor focusing on the ability of memorial landscapes to serve as sites for groups to debate the meaning of history and the commemorative process as part of larger struggles over identities.<sup>9</sup> This case study on the Harrison Tomb most closely fits the “arena” metaphor.

While the distinction between a monument and a memorial is sometimes blurry, and scholarship does not always differentiate between the two, geographer Wilbur Zelinsky defines a monument as “any object whose sole function at present is to celebrate or perpetuate the memory of particular events, ideals, individuals, or groups of persons,” which provides a broad and fungible definition, but emphasizes those who have made significant contributions and are worthy of some form of permanent commemoration in the landscape.<sup>10</sup> Zelinsky goes on to explain that a memorial serves more functions and goes beyond the single-purpose monument to include parks, gardens, forests, bridges, highways, buildings, or other kinds of institutions; he mentions that tombs and birthplaces of figures such as presidents often straddle the line between these two landscape features.<sup>11</sup> The official name for the Harrison Tomb’s location is the Harrison State Memorial, though I refer to the tomb itself as a monument within a memorial landscape for this study because it is located in a public space and it is marked through various forms of material culture, notably an obelisk, historical markers, and a park setting.<sup>12</sup>

Geographers in particular have contributed to studying memorialization by demonstrating the contestable and contradictory aspects of space and place, as the specific location of a given

monument affects how groups conceptualize and carry out memorialization, and locations can confirm, erode, contradict, or mute a memorial's intended meanings, as they simultaneously draw and give meaning to their surroundings.<sup>13</sup> As such, the constitutive relationship between memory and place is most obvious through material culture and landscapes.<sup>14</sup> More specifically, some geographers have examined the way in which historical figures are remembered in the landscape. Derek H. Alderman investigates the politics related to place in remembering Martin Luther King Jr. in a Georgia county through the process of naming streets after King.<sup>15</sup> Alderman shows that the image of a person, regardless of whether it is positive, negative, or ambiguous, plays an important role in remembering the past and the interpretation of any historical figure is open to a multitude of viewpoints.<sup>16</sup> In fact, Alderman argues through the example of King that these debates are not arbitrary, "but often accompany, revolve around, and participate in the production of memorial spaces and places."<sup>17</sup>

While today most Americans view King and his legacy in a positive light, other geographical studies similar to Alderman's show further complications in interpreting memorial landscapes. Jonathan I. Leib presents a case study of the controversy surrounding the mural of Confederate General Robert E. Lee in Richmond, Virginia.<sup>18</sup> Though Lee remains a problematic figure years after the Civil War ended, Leib focuses not on the fact of if, or which, icons of Lee will be erected or removed in Richmond's landscape, but where they will be placed and the problems that this can engender: "In this way the places themselves are intertwined in the construction of the meaning of symbols."<sup>19</sup> Through a study of an arguably more ambiguous personality, Chris Post investigated the issues surrounding the landscapes that memorialize mid-nineteenth century abolitionist John Brown in Kansas.<sup>20</sup> Post's article concentrates on the differing interpretations of Brown through time and from his commemoration at different sites by different groups, highlighting a variation in the collective memory for this controversial figure and his resultant ambiguous stature in American history.

One important theme tying these three studies together and relating them to this one is the concept of *reputational politics*. Reputational politics comes from the work of sociologist Gary Alan Fine and his research on society remembering major figures whose reputations have not been solidified as heroic or with high social approval and who carry what Fine labels "difficult reputations," for those who are somehow tarnished or otherwise controversial.<sup>21</sup> Alderman builds on this concept in geographical research, offering "an approach that focuses on the socially constructed and contested nature of commemorating historical figures and the discursive rivalries that underlie the memorialization of these figures."<sup>22</sup>

The studies from Alderman, Leib, and Post all highlight the high subjectivity of memorializing specific people and the numerous ways that society can interpret or portray them either historically, presently, or in the future. The individuals that carry out the shaping and control of historical reputations are *reputational entrepreneurs*.<sup>23</sup> Geography is particularly important to commemoration and the processes behind it, because it offers tangibility and visibility. It is also notable that few geographers have explored the role that memorial spaces play in reputational politics by not focusing on the struggle to define the cultural meanings and significance of specific historical figures in the landscape.<sup>24</sup> I demonstrate below how Harrison's reputational politics may have created problems for how society chose (or forgot) to remember him in material form and how reputational entrepreneurs helped to redefine those politics by advocating for the preservation and eventual enhancement of his gravesite.

Additionally, geographers have not thoroughly explored what presidential memorial landscapes have contributed to the national narrative. Some geographical research that has examined presidential memory in the cultural landscape has come from Craig E. Colten and his study of Lincoln place names and their creation of a vernacular region in Illinois.<sup>25</sup> Larger

studies include Zelinsky's *Nation into State*, in which he covers the influence of major American historical figures, including presidents, and how they are reflected and remembered in place names, landscapes, material culture, and civic institutions, and their effects on the development of American nationalism.<sup>26</sup> In *Shadowed Ground*, Kenneth E. Foote significantly adds to the geographical literature on monuments and commemoration and devotes a chapter to monuments for the four assassinated US Presidents: James Garfield, William McKinley, Abraham Lincoln, and John Kennedy.<sup>27</sup> Though these works demonstrate some geographical research on presidential sites, overall there is still little scholarship on the topic by geographers, despite their notable contributions to the literature in memory studies and the large potential for further research on presidential sites.

In other disciplines writing about presidential gravesites, journalist Brian Lamb notes how each president has helped shape the direction of the United States and visiting a president's grave helps people learn more about the men who have held the highest office and the times in which they lived: "When we learn about these men, we learn more about our collective selves."<sup>28</sup> Presidential deaths are very public events and, Lamb argues, the graves of presidents are more about personal and political symbolism.<sup>29</sup> Building on this point, historian Douglas Brinkley mentions that a pilgrimage to a presidential gravesite is a way to pay a "quiet tribute to all of our glorious past" and that "all presidents--no matter how well they performed in office--are revered by most Americans simply because they represent our grandest political traditions."<sup>30</sup> As such, "presidents' graves serve as guideposts to our past and why a monument of quiet reflection in such places nourishes the soul and fuels the historical imagination. It's a way to make a connection with the lives of individuals who helped shape our nation," since "both the lives and deaths of presidents play a part in our national drama."<sup>31</sup> Brinkley posits that regardless of a president's historical rank, one can find enlightenment at every presidential gravesite, as it is more important to pay homage to the *institution* of the presidency.<sup>32</sup> Oftentimes, the death of a president signals that "it is a symbol that is being mourned as much as, or more than, the man himself."<sup>33</sup>

Art historian Benjamin Hufbauer conducted several case studies of presidential libraries, which are less numerous than gravesites and have essentially only been around since 1940, though there are parallels to presidential resting places, as both are sites of commemoration.<sup>34</sup> Hufbauer observes the noticeable transformation in presidential commemoration since the dedication of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. in 1922, and the monuments of the past (obelisks, classical temples) have been largely replaced by libraries located principally outside of Washington.<sup>35</sup> These commemorative places are attempts to construct sites of civil religion, acting as sacred national places attracting pilgrimages in an effort to raise national consciousness of presidents who are represented as being worthy of patriotic veneration.<sup>36</sup> Hufbauer notes that the president is, for some, the person who embodies the nation, and the presidential library (or other commemorative site) is a material manifestation of this reality.<sup>37</sup> This last point gives one pause to wonder what may have happened in the case of Harrison's tomb.

Landscape history, which urban planner Daniel J. Marcucci basically defines as the "biography" of a landscape, either cultural or natural, is often a multidisciplinary endeavor in an attempt to understand a landscape's form and meaning and explain it in a temporal context.<sup>38</sup> Landscape history is by no means a new concept, but it has not been a common approach in geography. According to geographer Richard H. Schein, a landscape history empirically documents when, where, why, and by whom a landscape was created, altered, and so on.<sup>39</sup> Landscape history is about a specific place, but it can also encompass larger scales.<sup>40</sup> It must explain how and why a landscape evolved, focusing on what Marcucci calls keystone processes, or the points that were influential in the development of that landscape.<sup>41</sup> It not an area that



has always been attributed to historical geography, but often labeled as part of the “geographic factor in history.”<sup>42</sup> Geographer William Norton notes that the general tendency in cultural and historical geography has been to incorporate time, but not necessarily to argue for time as a major component or overriding point of interest in geographical studies.<sup>43</sup> While many geographers have advocated for landscape history, relatively few case studies are available. And though many geographical studies have approached landscape from an historical perspective, they have not always focused on the concept or use of landscape history per se.<sup>44</sup>

Leading historical geographer Michael Conzen notes that landscape history is perhaps the least developed approach to landscape studies in the United States and he maintains that because we exist in time, we must incorporate time into our studies of landscape.<sup>45</sup> Historically examining a landscape acknowledges it as both a history and as place, and focusing on its cumulative character recognizes that “nature, symbolism, and design are not static elements of the human record but change with historical experience”; in turn, this shows that the “geographically distinct quality of places is a product of the selective addition and survival over time of each new set of forms peculiar to that region or locality.”<sup>46</sup> Time is a key component to landscape history and each generation inherits landscapes shaped in certain ways, subsequently shaping and reshaping them with its own distinctive traits and selectively removing those from previous generations.<sup>47</sup> “The aim of the landscape historian, then,” writes Conzen, “is to distinguish the threads woven into this complex, changing fabric and account for their respective appearance, arrangement, and disappearance. Landscape elements vary widely in the speed of their formation and change, and time plays an important role in how historically composite a landscape may become.”<sup>48</sup>

Geographer and archaeologist Richard Muir observes that landscape history has always had a complex relationship with historical geography, as they are closely intertwined, but never really merged, with the differences between the two difficult to pinpoint.<sup>49</sup> Muir posits that historical geographers tend to employ evidence from sites and subsequently develop theories about processes of change, whereas landscape historians often regard sites and landscapes as worthy subjects of study by themselves.<sup>50</sup> And while landscape is a popular topic for geographers, it is fragmented between those who identify as historical geographers and those as landscape historians.<sup>51</sup> This dichotomy is complicated by the fact that the term *landscape history* has different roots and meanings on either side of the Atlantic, and even though historical geographers have been involved with the topic, it tends to have stronger ties to archaeology, as geographers and archaeologists view sites differently.<sup>52</sup>

Eminent historical geographer Alan R.H. Baker discusses how landscape history, like environmental history, has not always been warmly welcomed in the discipline of history and it has struggled for acceptance: “Historians have been incorporating landscapes into their studies for a very long time, but landscape history as an identifiable sub-discipline is a relatively recent and not always appreciated addition to history’s extended family.”<sup>53</sup> Architectural historians have also been somewhat aloof to the concept and, in a paper entitled “Architectural History or Landscape History?” Dell Upton urges architectural historians to move away from their rigid concept of landscape and embrace a wider notion of the cultural landscape and all that it encompasses.<sup>54</sup> While some geographers have had difficulty in justifying the relevance of landscape history, it is my impression that another problem is that geographers have not sufficiently shown how landscape history is a particularly useful concept beyond the theoretical insights it can offer.

Furthermore, while geographers have devoted significant attention to the role of landscape in remembering or forgetting the past, extant studies in the literature often offer only a short time frame in their analyses. Geographer Karen E. Till discusses this shortcoming in a similar approach she calls site biographies, which typically provide nuanced accounts of ways that national histories, memorial cultures, and shared stories are remembered or forgotten with the goal of

analyzing changes to existing public cultures of memory within a specific national context.<sup>55</sup> The best results from such an approach examines “how seemingly stable material forms are dynamic in space and time, and elucidates how contestations over the significance of past narratives are given meaning within particular socio-political contexts,” while “at their worst, biographies [of sites] are narrow in their analyses of social exchange and power relations,” by focusing on the emergence of a site and related debates in a limited period of time, neglecting to explore “how sites change over time or how events, practices, and places may become institutionalized venues of official memory.”<sup>56</sup>

In the case of memorial sites, such an approach is important, as Foote argues that sites themselves often play an active role in their own interpretation,<sup>57</sup> as I show below. But despite the spatial character of landscape history, papers on the topic in Anglophone scholarship are rare in major geographical journals and are more common in historical and archaeological periodicals.<sup>58</sup> This paper aims to contribute to historical geography by illustrating the significance and value of landscape history as more than a purely theoretical construct by demonstrating its usefulness both within and beyond geography, particularly with reference to applications in heritage and memory studies.

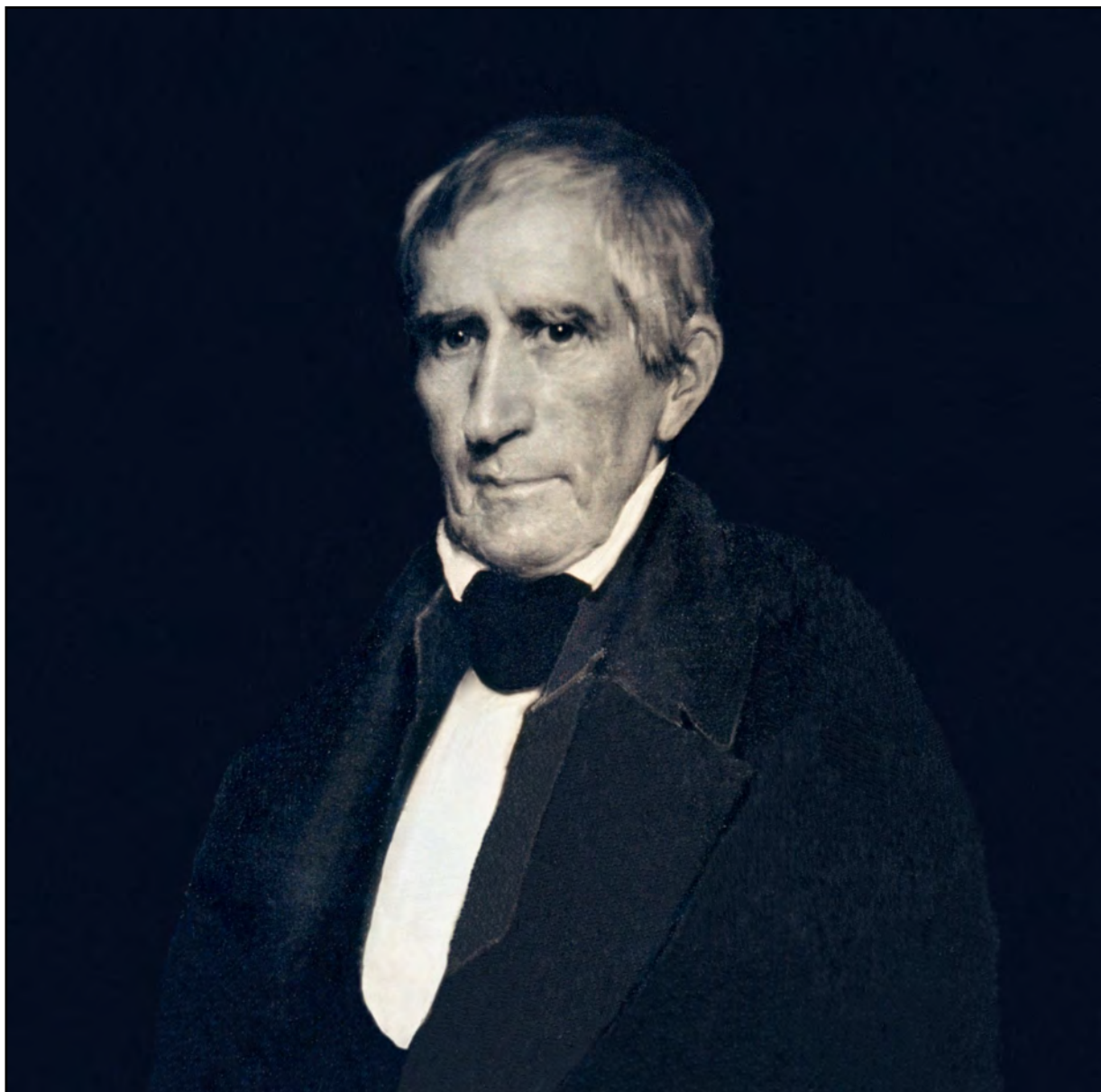
### **General biographical background**

While Harrison’s life and presidency have been covered more thoroughly by historians and biographers, it is necessary to provide a brief and selective overview of his life to better understand the story behind him, his burial site, and his presidential legacy. Because Harrison was a minor president, he has not received nearly as much attention as other figures such as Washington, Lincoln, or Kennedy, and therefore the sources on his life are noticeably fewer. Perhaps this fact contributes to his intriguing story.

William Henry Harrison was born on February 9, 1773 on Virginia’s Berkeley Plantation along the James River, the seventh child and third son in a family of three boys and four girls in a prominent political family (Figure 2). His ancestor Benjamin Harrison was a Jamestown colonist who arrived in Virginia in 1633 and was elected to the local council. Benjamin’s descendants included prominent colonial politician Benjamin Harrison III and his son, politician Benjamin Harrison IV, and his son Benjamin Harrison V, governor of Virginia, member of the Continental Congress, signer of the Declaration of Independence, and also the father of William Henry.

Young Harrison was educated at home early on and his parents pointed him toward the medical profession. He enrolled at Virginia’s Hampden-Sydney College and pursued a classical curriculum, but was pulled out by his parents and subsequently sent to Richmond for a medical apprenticeship, eventually transferring to the Medical School of Pennsylvania (now the University of Pennsylvania) in 1791. Harrison’s father died that year and, without money, he began to seek a new career path.<sup>59</sup> He dropped out of medical school and enrolled in the army as an officer, arriving with the troops at Fort Washington near the young settlement of Cincinnati in the fall of 1791, at a time when the Northwest Territory was consumed with wars among the region’s Native Americans.

Harrison rose rapidly through the ranks. His mother died in 1793, but his inheritance did not provide much, and with his fading connections to Virginia, he began to focus his life and career westward.<sup>60</sup> He made a name for himself at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794 and was promoted to commander. Harrison met and married Anna Symmes in 1795, and they moved to a one-hundred-and-sixty-acre farm near North Bend on land purchased from her father, judge and land developer John Cleves Symmes, where they eventually had ten children, allowing Harrison to move “smoothly from the Virginia gentry into the emerging political and economic elite of the Old Northwest.”<sup>61</sup>



**Figure 2.** Portrait of President William Henry Harrison. Daguerreotype, circa 1850, copy of 1841 original. Photographed by Albert Sands Southworth, Josiah Johnson Hawes, and Albert Gallatin Hoit.

Harrison left the military in 1798 and got a job as secretary of the Northwest Territory, and he was elected as the congressional delegate of that territory the following year. Ohio became a state in 1803 and President John Adams appointed Harrison as Governor of the Indiana Territory (comprising present-day Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and part of Minnesota), where his family lived well in an estate that William Henry called Grouseland in the then-capital of Vincennes. Harrison served as governor for twelve years, where his primary responsibility was to acquire land from Native Americans to promote settlement of whites, and he delivered by gaining millions of acres of land for the United States. Notably, much of the land that he obtained came through rather unscrupulous means, including coercion, bribery, and illegal purchases.<sup>62</sup>

In fact, it was his aggressive actions in acquiring Native American lands<sup>63</sup> that caught the ire of some tribes, culminating in the Battle of Tippecanoe on November 7, 1811, along the Tippecanoe River in northeastern Indiana, which subsequently catapulted Harrison to national fame. The battle occurred as a result of mutual antagonisms between the various tribes of the Indiana Territory and the American settlers and, even though much of the battle is remembered for the partial truths deriving from its folk accounts rather than historical facts, it still resulted in a decisive victory for Harrison.<sup>64</sup> While the Americans suffered more casualties than the Shawnee, and Native American leader Tecumseh was not actually present at the battle, Harrison managed to scatter Native American attackers and destroy some settlements, but antagonisms actually increased after the skirmish and resurfaced the next year in the War of 1812.<sup>65</sup>

At the onset of the War of 1812, Harrison left working in government to rejoin the army, where he became a general. His heroic efforts at the Battle of the Thames, which resulted in a far clearer victory than at Tippecanoe, propelled him to further fame, where he was second only to Andrew Jackson in iconic military status at that time.<sup>66</sup> In 1814, with the war still underway, Harrison submitted his resignation to President James Madison and “Old Tippecanoe” retired from the military to return to a quiet life in North Bend. But politics called again when Harrison returned to the House of Representatives in 1816, where he became a strong advocate for veterans throughout his life and remained a popular and prominent citizen, especially in Ohio. After his term ended in 1819, he returned to North Bend, but was nominated for the Ohio State Senate, where he served from 1819 to 1821.

Afterward, Harrison came home, disappointed that he was unable to gain a higher office and the financial security he craved,<sup>67</sup> though he returned to Washington, D.C. as one of Ohio’s U.S. Senators in 1825, spending another three years in the Capitol, where he unsuccessfully tried to get the vice presidential nomination under John Quincy Adams. As a consolation, Adams appointed Harrison as diplomat to Colombia until 1829. He did not stay there long, as Adams lost the presidential election to Andrew Jackson in 1828 and, due to deep hostility between Jackson and Harrison for many years, President Jackson recalled Harrison from his post when the new foreign minister arrived in Colombia later in 1829, again sending Harrison home to North Bend.<sup>68</sup>

Back home, the Harrison estate had greatly expanded after the War of 1812 and, by Harrison’s homecoming, the farm, nicknamed The Point, extended for about five miles along the Ohio River, with much of the land parceled off to the Harrison children as they became adults.<sup>69</sup> His political career appeared to be over and he suffered from financial trouble due to numerous bad business deals and his many dependents. Because of these financial entanglements, Harrison eagerly accepted an appointment as Hamilton County Clerk of Courts in 1836, which was a major step down for someone of his stature.<sup>70</sup>

What appeared to be a quiet homecoming ended due to a political sea change in the United States in the late 1830s, as Andrew Jackson’s presidency created two political parties, the Democrats and the Whigs. Harrison ran for president as a Whig against New York Democrat and Vice President Martin Van Buren in the 1836 election and, despite Van Buren being the favorite and winning the presidency, Harrison did well in the polls. The political climate quickly turned against Van Buren, however, as the Panic of 1837 set in and destroyed the US economy just weeks after he took office, resulting in a deep, widespread depression; another panic followed in 1839, exacerbating the economic situation further.<sup>71</sup> At this point, national attention turned again to Harrison as a contender for the 1840 election against Van Buren.

The Whig party emerged from the economic turmoil of the Jackson administration and in opposition to his perceived authoritarian style of governance.<sup>72</sup> Harrison gained greater support as the Whig nominee as a type of hero-candidate with popular appeal from his military success



and without Jackson's authoritarian tendencies;<sup>73</sup> he beat out Henry Clay for the nomination, which he received in December 1839, selecting Virginia Senator John Tyler as vice president on the ticket. Other suggestions for the vice president included Massachusetts Senator Daniel Webster, but

Webster and virtually everyone else who might have been a first choice rejected a post that had traditionally been regarded as meaningless at best. The vice president had so little to do that the men who occupied the job often never even bothered to come to Washington during their term of office. . . . And having made it through eight presidencies without any serious health crises, people had stopped seriously contemplating what would happen if Number Two suddenly became Number One.<sup>74</sup>

During the campaign, people often didn't even bother to ask Tyler about his political beliefs.<sup>75</sup> The Whigs had no political platform and no core group of supporters, and their campaign was built with songs, slogans, and rallies.<sup>76</sup> The media branded Harrison the "log cabin and hard cider" candidate to emphasize his frontier background and genial, humble, and unpretentious image, contrasted with Van Buren's image as the urbane, affluent Washington insider.

Until more recently, presidential elections were essentially in the hands of America's landed elite, elected officials, and other political insiders. This began to change with the Whigs' election tactics, such as the log cabin imagery, referring to Harrison as "Tippecanoe," and through direct appeals to rural voters and common people, even though the Whigs had more aristocrats among them than the Democrats.<sup>77</sup> As a result, "Tippecanoe and Tyler too" became a legendary slogan in American political history. Harrison began making speeches himself, directly addressing crowds of voters, which was a major political breakthrough,<sup>78</sup> and he actually went out and campaigned in person in the famously branded "Log Cabin and Hard Cider" campaign. The voting public was attracted to and enthusiastically consumed the Whig Party's myths and emblems.<sup>79</sup> Though there was controversy regarding his age, Harrison used frequent speechmaking as a means to prove his fitness.

Voting commenced on October 30, 1840 and continued until November 18. Harrison was exhausted from all of the personal campaigning, but he was determined to prove that he was capable of the job.<sup>80</sup> While the economy was the foremost issue, slavery, Native American relations, and national expansion were other major topics at the time. Tippecanoe himself had a questionable status on some of these controversial issues, as he "consistently supported slavery," was a slave owner himself, and had a "mixed" record regarding Native Americans. He appeared sympathetic to Native Americans' plight, but was also willing to take advantage of them, historically gaining somewhat of a reputation as an "Indian killer"; his war record was also controversial and remains so today, and defending his military record was one reason Harrison sought to get back into politics.<sup>81</sup> Harrison spoke in generalities and avoided directly addressing major issues except for the abuse of presidential power, spoke of only serving for one term, and stressed his military background and his life as a simple farmer.<sup>82</sup> In the end, Harrison won only slightly more than Van Buren in the popular vote, but the Whigs won both the House of Representatives and the Senate, and Old Tippecanoe emerged victorious in an electoral landslide.<sup>83</sup> Indeed, the sudden jump from the lowly Clerk of Courts to successful presidential candidate marked his return to national prominence as "one of the great success stories in American political history."<sup>84</sup> The election of 1840 marked the first time two nationally organized political parties competed for the White House.<sup>85</sup>

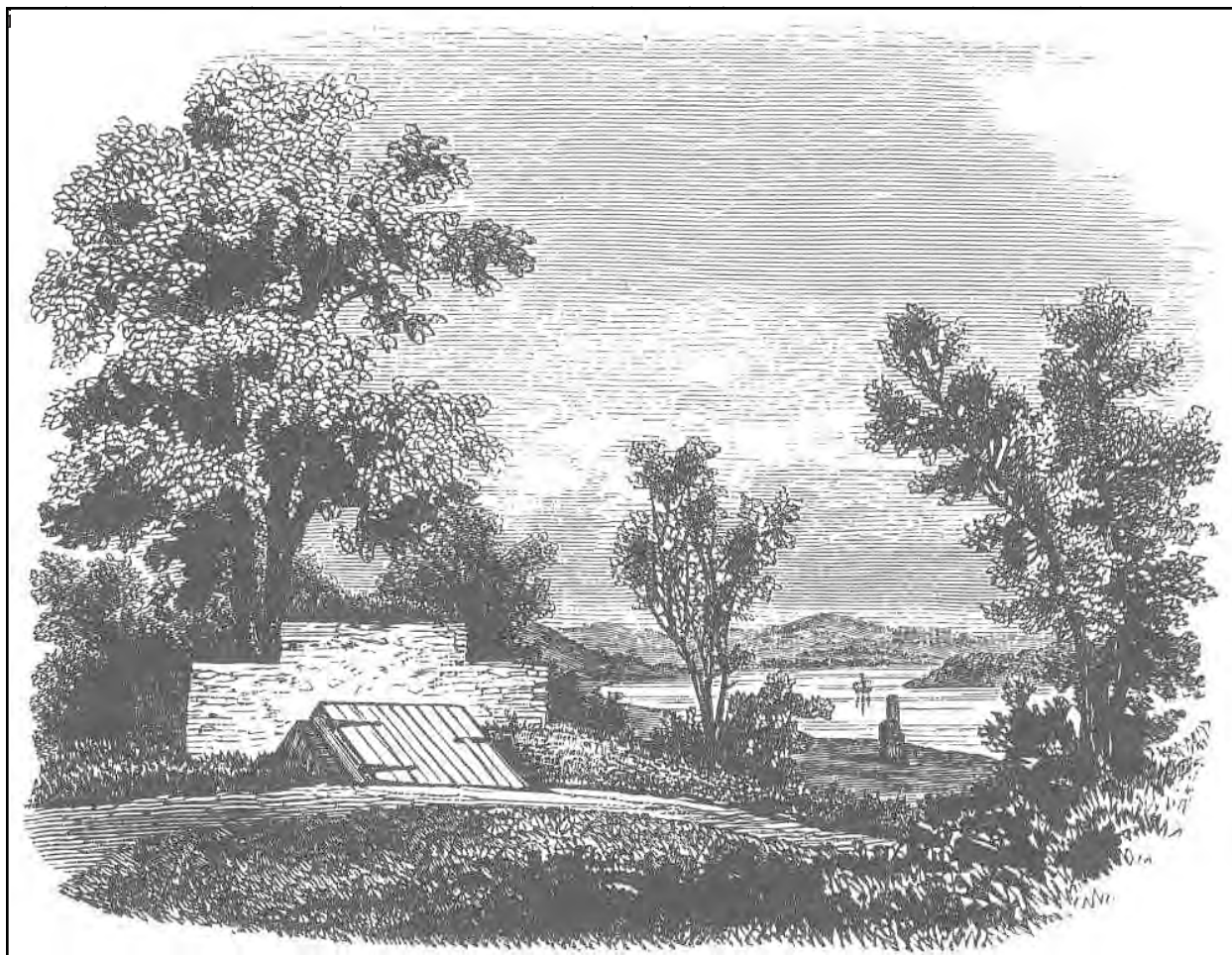
Harrison arrived in Washington on February 9, 1841, his sixty-eighth birthday, in the middle of a snowstorm.<sup>86</sup> Inauguration Day arrived on March 4 and, in the rain during a Washington winter, neglecting to wear an overcoat or even a hat during his address, Old Tippecanoe delivered a nearly two-hour speech, the longest inaugural address in US Presidential history, in front of a crowd of at least fifty thousand.<sup>87</sup> As a result, he contracted pneumonia. Prior to the speech, he had spent nearly a month almost endlessly walking around Washington, D.C. in the cold, wet weather, meeting with politicians and regular citizens alike, and the constant personal interaction exhausted him.<sup>88</sup> By March 26, he was beginning to show signs of illness and, on April 4, 1841, President William Henry Harrison died after barely a month in office.

Up to that point, the United States had never experienced the death of a sitting president and the country was naturally shocked and grief-stricken. Biographer Gail Collins succinctly sums up the sadness by stating that, despite his earlier fame and achievements, the country never really got the chance to know Harrison.<sup>89</sup> Congress was not even in session at the time of his death and John Tyler was in Williamsburg, Virginia, unaware of the president's illness; in fact, the press did not even mention that Harrison was ill until March 31.<sup>90</sup> Tyler received the news early on April 5 and left for Washington immediately to be sworn in as the tenth President of the United States.<sup>91</sup> Though Harrison's life came to an abrupt end, the tragedy behind his public memory did not end with his death.

### **A landscape history of the Harrison tomb**

News of Harrison's passing spread slowly throughout the country, "[bringing] sorrow to opponents as well as partisans," while ministers across the nation preached memorial sermons and "newspapers of both parties were 'clothed in mourning.'" <sup>92</sup> While Harrison's passing pleased some detractors (most notably Andrew Jackson), it created a major political problem, as "never before had a president died in office, and as word of the tragedy slowly spread throughout the country, outpourings of grief continued for weeks," including sorrow among some of the Native American tribes who knew Harrison.<sup>93</sup> His body rested in state at the Capitol until the funeral procession, which attracted some forty thousand people in Washington, D.C. on April 7, 1841, as they "reverently watched the melancholy procession make its way to the Congressional Cemetery."<sup>94</sup> The president was temporarily kept in a public vault in Washington's Congressional Cemetery until he could be laid to rest at North Bend in accordance with his wishes, though his tomb had to be built in response to his unexpected departure. Harrison's body did not actually arrive at the family property until it was delivered by ship from Pittsburgh in July 1841. In fact, it was not for years after his death that Harrison or his whereabouts garnered any significant attention in the media or the wider public.

In an 1872 article from *The Cincinnati Daily Enquirer*, the pseudonymous Ithuriel recounts an "expedition" to find the whereabouts of Harrison's burial site in the early 1870s and the apparent mystery surrounding it by opening his piece declaring, "The vexed question of the death and burial place of the lamented W.H. Harrison has at last been settled."<sup>95</sup> Ithuriel, in the company of the Harrison Tomb Legislative Committee, took a train to North Bend in 1872 where they hired Native American guides who knew of the tomb's location to take them to it.<sup>96</sup> In the article, the author makes references to the "rumored" death of Harrison, implying doubt about his passing, and he mentions that some people even thought that his death was based on hearsay.<sup>97</sup> This account mentions that discussions to build a monument for Harrison had occurred for years to create a proper memorial site for the tomb that had been neglected for decades, even by that time.<sup>98</sup> The party found the site to be "cheap and unworthy" of the distinguished man resting

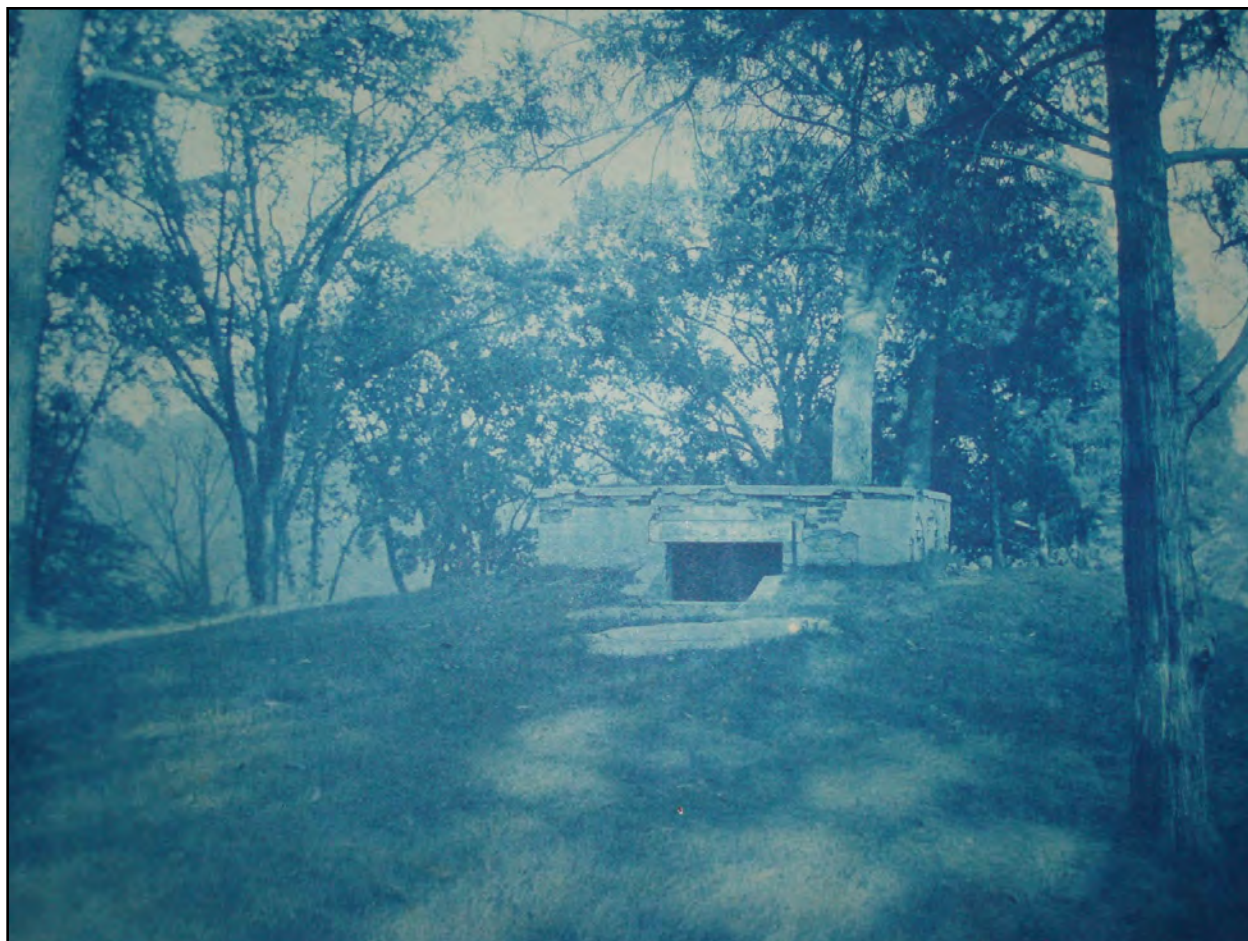


**Figure 3.** An illustration depicting the Harrison Tomb along the Ohio River, mid-nineteenth century. From Benson J. Lossing's *Pictorial Field-Book of the War of 1812*, 1869.

While accounts differ regarding the precise size of the original tomb, it was between approximately ten and fifteen square feet and between three and four feet tall. The *New York Times* mentions perhaps the first proposal for someone to obtain and care for the Harrison property, though neglect of the tomb was apparent as early as 1846.<sup>100</sup> The initial vault was “a simple, barrel-arched brick structure topped with sod.”<sup>101</sup> Early on, the Harrison family installed an iron door to prevent desecration, but with little success.<sup>102</sup> One notorious anecdote from local history came from 1878 when John Scott Harrison, son of William Henry, father of Benjamin, and an Ohio Congressman, died that year and was supposed to be buried in the Harrison Tomb. Grave robbery and body snatching were common in those days, particularly for medical schools in need of fresh cadavers in light of strict laws regarding dissection, even for scientific purposes, which resulted in an underground body snatching industry, and the Harrison family found itself to be victims of this crime.<sup>103</sup> In fact, they found that the body of John Scott Harrison and another relative had been stolen after the tomb was opened in preparation for his funeral. Both bodies were found and reburied, but the tale brought unease to the Harrison family and the local communities. In 1879, the family oversaw a reconstruction of the tomb after this incident, but it proved insufficient.

More public attention arrived in the 1880s, as two formal meetings in Ohio about proper care for the tomb failed to yield any results.<sup>104</sup> The *Louisville Courier-Journal* remarked on the sparse





**Figure 4.** The Harrison Tomb, circa 1890. Courtesy of the Harrison-Symmes Foundation.

quality of the grave and compared its poor condition to those of other presidential resting places. The *Cincinnati Enquirer* noted the contradiction of Harrison's resting place that lay unvisited, while hundreds of people would see a statue of him in downtown Cincinnati every day, and thus arguing that his gravesite was deserving of some memorial.<sup>105</sup> More public support turned out in October 1887 when two thousand five hundred people attended the first public demonstration to honor Harrison (albeit forty-six years after he was laid to rest), in an attempt to raise public interest in a monument, as "the utter neglect of the grave of the distinguished man has become a source of mortification to the pioneer citizens of the Miami and Ohio Valleys." The crowd found it especially noticeable that Indiana Senator Benjamin Harrison, William Henry's grandson, did not attend the event.<sup>106</sup>

These events might have had an impact, as the condition of the tomb improved slightly by the 1890s (Figure 4). In 1896, an equestrian statue of Old Tippecanoe funded by the State of Ohio was dedicated in downtown Cincinnati that still stands, though no such monument was established at his tomb, even though the statue was originally intended for his burial site (Figure 5).<sup>107</sup> A spectator at that ceremony stated that the country would not have done "its full duty" until a proper monument stood at the president's tomb.<sup>108</sup> Nonetheless, Harrison's relatives and descendants created a new tomb in 1894, which added more crypts and was slightly enlarged. It was remade of limestone and laid in cement, as opposed to the original brick and mortar crypt.





**Figure 5.** Harrison's statue in downtown Cincinnati. Photo by author.

The doorway was deepened and, for the first time, a "Harrison" inscription was added to mark the tomb.<sup>109</sup> Earlier that year, the then-former President Benjamin Harrison had visited the tomb and, upset by its condition, made plans to replace the old structure and make improvements to the site.<sup>110</sup> Before Ben Harrison's involvement, the public could not do anything about the condition of the tomb because it was still on the property of the Harrison family. While the view of original tomb was somewhat obscured, the new tomb was visible for several miles along the Ohio River and parties began discussing using the new site as a base for a monument around this time.<sup>111</sup>

But the discussion went no further until new attention followed an article that again exposed the severe quality of the tomb and subsequently sparked renewed public interest, though little action.<sup>112</sup> The early twentieth century saw a rise in deforestation around the tomb for lumber and a movement began to preserve both the forest and tomb in the hopes of creating a government-operated park.<sup>113</sup> Harrison's descendants, scattered around the country, began to plead for the government to care for his gravesite. One article mentions how the tomb was virtually forgotten on Decoration Day (now Memorial Day), referring to the ragged American flag flying over the tomb that had not been replaced for a significant amount of time.<sup>114</sup> On Decoration Day of 1910, another group visited the "neglected tomb" that they discovered haphazardly, and acknowledged that its services were probably the first held at the site "in decades."<sup>115</sup> The party was disturbed by the tomb's poor condition and decided at that moment to form the William Henry Harrison Club, with the organizational goal to restore the tomb and fly a large flag at the site.<sup>116</sup>

These concerns were partially addressed in 1912 by the Hamilton County Sons of Veterans Club, who asked for national assistance to create a "suitable monument" for Harrison's resting place and also to purchase and maintain the grounds of the tomb.<sup>117</sup> The tomb was still in rough condition, with parts of it hacked away and stolen by "relic hunters," the grounds covered in weeds and underbrush, and many unmarked crypts.<sup>118</sup> James Hendryx wrote in a newspaper article that "a visitor to this tomb is deeply impressed by the general air of dilapidation and neglect surrounding the final resting place of a former President of the United States of America," mentioning the high regard for Harrison at the national level during the time of his death and contrasting it to the condition of his tomb.<sup>119</sup> Despite talk from groups to preserve the site, there was still no action by either the United States or the State of Ohio to do so, even amid public outcry.<sup>120</sup> Another group pledged to care for the tomb the next year, resulting in more fundraising, following more damage and vandalism, including the tattered flag that was raised there just a few years before, and a broken and vandalized door to the tomb.<sup>121</sup>

It was not until 1915 that some serious, formal attempts to preserve the Harrison Tomb and the memory of President Harrison were underway, when the Ohio Archeological and Historical Society (now the Ohio Historical Society) made a formal appeal in response to dire calls to care for the tomb and growing concern from Cincinnatians.<sup>122</sup> The movement hoped to secure federal, or at least state, involvement in the tomb's preservation. An article describes the tone of the meeting as leaving "little doubt but that the outcome will start a concerted movement which will result in the tomb of William Henry Harrison being provided with a magnificent memorial like those which mark the last resting place of the three other Presidents that Ohio furnished to the nation – Rutherford B. Hayes, James A. Garfield, and William McKinley."<sup>123</sup> One newspaper article recounted the years of neglect at the tomb and that people were largely unaware of the tomb's condition until articles and editorials were published.<sup>124</sup> Though there were moves to acquire the property and ask Congress for money to erect a memorial and maintain it, nothing ever happened. The article goes as far as to compare it to other presidential memorials, such as the large monetary value of Hayes's memorial and the grandiosity of the McKinley and Garfield monuments; in Ohio, the Harrison site was the only one which was not memorialized or formally recognized.<sup>125</sup> Thus, "it is now deemed to be high time that this action also be taken and the

dereliction of the past thus atoned for.”<sup>126</sup> In late 1916, Harrison’s descendants agreed to cede the land to the memorial association as long as the property received adequate care.<sup>127</sup>

The momentum to preserve the tomb was also likely propelled by global events with far-reaching ramifications, namely World War I. In 1919, after the conclusion of the war, there was a renewed public interest in caring for veterans, and this sentiment was demonstrated by the Ohio state legislature that appropriated \$10,000 for improvements at the Harrison Tomb.<sup>128</sup> While groups tried for over fifty years to find help for the tomb, the war sparked the impetus to take meaningful action.<sup>129</sup> Civic groups used the money to restore the tomb, acquire the land, and add other improvements, such as better access by improving the roads to the site with the hope of turning the area into a park, as care for the tomb ceased after the last round of improvements in 1887.<sup>130</sup> One article chronicles the many groups that attempted to preserve the tomb, though they had only limited success in doing so.<sup>131</sup>

It appeared that the Harrison Tomb would finally receive its due status as state funding for the site was finally authorized in late 1920 and the State of Ohio gained title to both the tomb and the property, including a donation of land totaling thirteen acres for the site.<sup>132</sup> Cincinnati architect Harry Hake created the plan and constructed the memorial free of charge. The groundbreaking for the park occurred on October 24, 1921, drawing a large ceremony and crowd including citizens, politicians, and Harrison descendants.<sup>133</sup> Media coverage documented the sense of shame from the crowd regarding the poor condition of the tomb. A local school superintendent mentioned how he “bowed his head in shame that a nation should be so ungrateful, and a state so neglectful, as to let the tomb of one of the founders of America fall into such decay.”<sup>134</sup> While Cincinnatians were largely familiar with Harrison’s equestrian statue located downtown, “few probably think of the long neglect of the grave of that great character,” pointing to the disparity in Harrison’s popularity in his life versus his death.<sup>135</sup> The landscaped entrance with its two pillars was completed in 1922 and the sixty-foot limestone obelisk was finished and dedicated in 1924. The obverse of the obelisk prominently lists Harrison’s major political positions:

WILLIAM  
HENRY  
HARRISON.

SECRETARY OF THE  
NORTHWEST TERRITORY.  
DELEGATE OF THE NORTHWEST  
TERRITORY TO CONGRESS.  
TERRITORIAL GOVERNOR  
OF INDIANA.  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS FROM  
OHIO.  
OHIO STATE SENATOR.  
UNITED STATES SENATOR  
FROM OHIO.  
MINISTER TO COLOMBIA.  
NINTH PRESIDENT OF  
THE UNITED STATES.





**Figure 6.** Landscaped entrance to the Harrison Tomb. Photo by author.





**Figure 7.** A view of the Harrison Tomb obelisk and memorial site from the adjacent road. Photo by author.

The reverse of the structure lists his major military accomplishments:

ENSIGN OF THE FIRST  
UNITED STATES INFANTRY  
COMMANDENT  
OF FORT WASHINGTON.  
HERO OF TIPPECANOE.

MAJOR GENERAL  
IN THE WAR OF 1812.  
VICTOR OF THE BATTLE  
OF THE THAMES.  
AVENGER OF THE MASSACRE  
OF THE RIVER RAISIN.

The protection and management of the site was officially passed from the Ohio legislature to the Ohio Historical Society in 1934 (Figures 6-8).

After the conversion of Harrison's austere crypt into a historical monument, all appeared to be well as Ohio and the United States had provided a proper resting place for a former



**Figure 8.** Harrison's crypt next to his wife, Anna Symmes Harrison, and other relatives. Photo by author.

president who had been all but forgotten. And yet, all was not well, as the Harrison Tomb would be forgotten again. There is scarcely any mention of the Harrison Tomb in any media for years after its dedication as a monument. In 1948, not terribly long after responsibility for the tomb came under the care of the Ohio Historical Society, a newspaper reported that the tomb was in "bad condition" and concerned citizens from the North Bend area appealed to the state for help, only to receive nothing.<sup>136</sup> Again, the face of the tomb had cracked, the flagpole was rusted and with a torn flag, with the road leading to the site being a "disgrace," and only one rusty highway marker pointing to the tomb's location.<sup>137</sup>

The property suffered additional loss when, in 1958, local power company Cincinnati Gas & Electric (CG&E) destroyed the house where Benjamin Harrison was raised after it purchased some of the land.<sup>138</sup> Though William Henry's home burned down before the Civil War, much of the family continued to live at The Point for years after his death, and some structures remained on the property.<sup>139</sup> Initially, a chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution intended to erect a plaque documenting the childhood home of Benjamin Harrison, but the group was not even notified about the house's destruction, despite its plans for a ceremony or even a chance to place a marker.<sup>140</sup> Harrison biographer Gail Collins, whose father worked for CG&E at that time, mentions that The Point was a significant historic landmark, but due to insufficient funding to preserve it, CG&E's management did not want a historic landmark on its property.





**Figure 9.** Interpretive markers installed at the Harrison Tomb by the Ohio Historical Society in 2007. Photo by author.

They had some workers quietly destroy it, though the *Cincinnati Enquirer* claims that the house was destroyed for “safety reasons,” because it was beyond repair from dilapidation and it was a potential “hazard.”<sup>141</sup> Notably, the Harrison Tomb was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1970, but even then it failed to garner sufficient care or attention for about another twenty years. Indeed, the fortunes of the Harrison Tomb finally began to turn for the better beginning in the early 1990s.

The movement to preserve the tomb was initiated through the formation of the local non-profit Harrison-Symmes Memorial Foundation in 1991, which is staffed by a small group of civic-minded citizens who simply enjoy preserving local history and the memory of William Henry Harrison and his relatives. They educate the public through occasional tours and events, and through the operation of a small museum nearby. While the Harrison Tomb is still owned by the Ohio Historical Society, the Harrison-Symmes Foundation maintains the grounds through an annual stipend.<sup>142</sup> By 1991, the tomb suffered from a leaking roof, the grounds were filled with litter, the view of the obelisk was partially obscured by dead trees, and a fallen tree had knocked out all of the electricity and lights, with the resultant darkness drawing substantial vandalism.<sup>143</sup>

In 1996, care for the tomb was ensured through large renovations that year, the first preservation work at the site since 1922.<sup>144</sup> The Harrison-Symmes Foundation was able to obtain

grant money through political involvement with state senators and the governor of Ohio.<sup>145</sup> CG&E restored electricity and vandalism declined as the tomb received greater care, including clean stonework, repaired steps, new mortar, new lighting, new paving, a new flagpole, re-landscaping, and the addition of a wheelchair ramp.<sup>146</sup> The Ohio Historical Society erected several interpretive markers at the site in 2007 and a small parking lot was added to invite visitors to the park area (Figure 9). As of 2009, the tomb receives about 5,500 annual visitors.<sup>147</sup> While finding funding is a constant concern for the Harrison-Symmes Foundation, the Harrison Tomb is now in good hands and presently well cared for. But one important question remains: how could something as potentially important and historically significant as the grave of an American president be neglected for so long?

### **Creating a legacy for a president who never had the chance to be president**

A geographical study of the Harrison Tomb reveals the paradox of how to address the legacy of a president and how to remember him in the cultural landscape when he was only president for a very brief time. After all, what *is* his legacy? It appears that, superficially, Harrison's presidency was basically a footnote in his life and career, and that, given the absence of presidential accomplishments and his treatment by many historians, he was only nominally a president. Without knowing the story behind Harrison *and* his tomb, it appears that the Harrison Tomb is a monument to an inconsequential politician, or possibly even a fluke.

Collins asserts that, "Harrison's one-month term in office was really nothing more than a list of nonachievements."<sup>148</sup> She points to the folklore of the Battle of Tippecanoe, noting that it was a minor fight against an outnumbered group of Native Americans, with the whites suffering more casualties, and arguing that Harrison was more successful in the War of 1812 and as governor of Indiana Territory by cheaply acquiring several states worth of land for the United States. She also argued that his greatest political achievement came "as one of the most ridiculous presidential campaigns in history," that depicted Harrison as the simple soldier who drank cider and lived in a log cabin.<sup>149</sup> Collins postulates that had he lived, Harrison would not have been a great president anyway and that the Whigs may have lasted a bit longer as a political party, but neither he nor his party would have prevented the Civil War.<sup>150</sup> "The William Henry Harrison story," she writes, "is less about issues than about the accidents of fate and silly campaigns."<sup>151</sup> Historian Norma Lois Peterson mentions that Harrison never considered himself a great political leader and the Whigs picked him as their candidate because they believed that he had the best chance of defeating Van Buren and that, in power, he would be "pliable" and easily submit to the wishes of the party.<sup>152</sup> She also suggests that Harrison would have been a weak and ineffective president.<sup>153</sup> Biographer Mary Jane Child Queen succinctly states her opinion that "inadvertently, President William Henry Harrison's one and only contribution came about due to his sudden death."<sup>154</sup> The dismissive tone from these writers seems to make Harrison out to be something of a joke. With such an attitude, it is little wonder that the Harrison Tomb suffered in a state of decay for decades. But a closer examination of the historical context around the time that Ohioans took action to preserve the tomb leads to some insight into how the crypt became the memorialized landscape that it is today.

Even back into the late nineteenth century, the memory of Harrison was dim. Before its enlargement, his tomb was visible from the Ohio River and, even before the Civil War, in the days of busier traffic along the river, it was customary for steamboats to blast a "salute" when passing North Bend and, for years, steamboats and other watercraft blew horns or tolled bells as they approached Harrison's tomb.<sup>155</sup> People tried to revive this custom in the early twentieth century, which may have inspired architect Frederick Garber to create a memorial (the obelisk) on top of the tomb itself and give it greater visibility.<sup>156</sup> Evidently, many travelers along the river did not



even know why there was such a custom and they did it out of habit; others knew that the salute was for President Harrison, but they mistakenly believed it to be for *Benjamin* Harrison.<sup>157</sup> What might have renewed public interest in Old Tippecanoe?

Much of the larger social impetus to preserve American history began during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Zelinsky observes that nationalistic monuments did not become common in the landscape until the 1850s when an “explosion” of monuments followed in the half-century following the Civil War.<sup>158</sup> During this time, the Civil War and Reconstruction were still in recent national memory and widespread socioeconomic polarization and economic depressions resulted from the Panics of 1873 and 1893. Rapid technological advances and increasing immigration contributed to the sense of alienation and instability that many Americans felt and experienced during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. These major changes had specific effects on Ohio through the growth of industry, a sharp decline in its rural population coupled with increasing population and urbanization, greater political involvement and activism, rapid technological advancement, and a stronger presence of labor unions and professional societies, with uneven social and geographical impacts between Reconstruction and World War I.<sup>159</sup>

Historian Andrew R.L. Cayton sums up the zeitgeist, declaring, “Rural or urban, most Ohioans in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries believed that their world was reconfiguring itself overnight.”<sup>160</sup> Following similar movements across the United States from the 1890s through the 1910s, a sense of revivalism swept through the Buckeye State, as many Ohioans believed that there were serious problems with their state and sought to reform government to reinvigorate public culture, which they premised upon restoring “a sense of common purpose in the midst of rapid change.”<sup>161</sup> In an attempt to cope with these changes, some “wealthy and respectable Ohioans” became insistent on the value of a public culture, fearing that the world of the early nineteenth century was becoming more fragmented from the disparate voices in society, as people generally seemed more concerned with themselves than the greater good and material progress trumped moral progress.<sup>162</sup>

The proliferation of institutions such as presses, libraries, schools, churches, and civic organizations, as well as parks, cemeteries, and memorials helped to revive Ohio’s public culture, especially in partial reaction to growing political radicalism, rapid immigration, and Americans’ subsequent xenophobia that accompanied this rapid social change and its perceived threats.<sup>163</sup> The outbreak of World War I, which had a particularly profound effect on Ohio, suspended efforts for reform in the state. However, it also reinvigorated the motivation for reform by enforcing certain cultural values, such as a “widespread insistence on cultural homogeneity and absolute patriotism” and the spread of “Americanization” through society and institutions promoting reconnections to American heritage.<sup>164</sup>

Ohioans, like other Americans, became more conspicuous in their public displays of patriotism, whether they were saluting the flag, pledging allegiance to the United States, or talking about the necessity of law and order. Understandable as some of this hysteria was in the midst of a war, it represented a coercive period in the evolution of a public culture. At no point in the history of Ohio had a citizen’s political identity been so critical. Loyalty to the United States and to Ohio had to trump any and all personal loyalties.<sup>165</sup>

Though most progressive reforms occurred at the local and state level, observers documenting the changes describe the sentiments as a reaction to the sense that “Ohio had lost its soul” and many Ohio progressives sought to restore a sense of order to economic and social worlds that had become disjointed during recent periods of industrial and urban growth.<sup>166</sup>

This explanation corresponds to the impacts of World War I on the sentiments behind the Harrison Tomb that I covered in the previous section, when the monument directly benefited from renewed public interest and financial support from the state with greater improvements in the early 1920s. But his tomb was not the only landscape artifact dedicated to Harrison, as his memory is recorded in other landscapes and geographical features. For example, Harrison has statues, towns, counties, and schools named after him across the United States, and not just in Ohio. Beyond the equestrian statue in Cincinnati, these include his birthplace, Berkeley Plantation in Charles City County, Virginia; Grouseland in Vincennes, Indiana; the Tippecanoe Battlefield Museum in Battle Ground, Indiana; a Harrison statue in Indianapolis; and a Harrison bust at the Virginia State Capitol in Richmond. But these sites and artifacts are relatively few reminders of Harrison in the landscape, especially compared to figures like Lincoln or Washington, and they suggest that he was more of a local or regional historical figure than a president. From this realization, we see a stark inequality in how American presidents are remembered in the landscape.

Richard Norton Smith wryly observes how “[Franklin] Pierce, [Millard] Fillmore, and [James] Buchanan are relegated to the *Jeopardy* Daily Double, while Lincoln’s Springfield [Illinois] tomb attracts 300,000 visitors each year.”<sup>167</sup> As a point of comparison, there is a wide inequality for the care, preservation, and promotion of presidential sites. In some cases in Ohio, the “Mother of Presidents,” some sites receive federal funding, such as the William Howard Taft House in Cincinnati or the James Garfield House in Mentor; Ulysses S. Grant has three sites commemorating his life in Ohio alone, despite being entombed in New York City.

Garfield provides an interesting comparison because there was no immediate, popular movement to memorialize him, as he was second only to William Harrison in having the shortest term as president and he left no imprint on American politics; his reputation rested solely on his career as a scholar, Civil War general, and Congressman.<sup>168</sup> Secondly, Garfield’s death occurred at a peaceful time in American history, and his presidential career was not tied to any major historical event.<sup>169</sup> “Yet,” Foote comments, “Garfield had led an impressive life, and his accomplishments seemed to demand commemoration,” and he eventually received it in the form of an ornate mausoleum in Cleveland and a statue in Washington.<sup>170</sup> For smaller presidential sites, particularly those of lesser known presidents like Harrison, “just managing to stay open is a triumph.”<sup>171</sup> Many have to raise money locally, or are dependent on institutions such as the Ohio Historical Society, but they often struggle for funding, face constant maintenance problems, and have to deal with costly site preservation.<sup>172</sup>

In addition to his seeming historical obscurity and insignificance, at least in contemporary public memory, Harrison’s legacy is also partially entangled in his own reputational politics. Much of his reputation is clearly related to the changes in how the public remembered him through time, and I suspect that, in general, Harrison might not have been viewed as problematically in the past and he might be today. Zelinsky notes that Harrison is among the heroic figures that entered the American scene in the development of American nationalism during the approximate seventy-five years between the Constitutional Convention and the outbreak of the Civil War.<sup>173</sup> And though none of these characters rivaled the stature of the Founding Fathers, their inclusion in this cohort and in the national narrative reveals much “about the character of the rising nation from their identities and their followings.”<sup>174</sup> While Harrison is heroically depicted in his equestrian statue in downtown Cincinnati and his tomb extolls his long list of political and military accomplishments, these sites certainly do not focus on his exploitation and killing of Native Americans or his support of slavery, as these were highly important political topics within the temporal context that Zelinsky frames. Historian Robert M. Owens describes Harrison’s record with Native Americans to be mixed, while at times he was helpful and protective of them,

at others he was quite the opposite. He even went as far as punishing whites who mistreated or killed Native Americans, though this was not always enforceable.<sup>175</sup> It becomes apparent that remembering Harrison through time became not only more complicated, but also carried politically charged connotations, further establishing him as a potentially “difficult reputation” and affecting the reputational politics behind his legacy.

Reputations fluctuate over time, especially when claims are contested and, as society evolves, so does the reputation in question.<sup>176</sup> Fine affirms that not all attempts to establish reputations succeed because, for a reputation to sustain public memory, it must have an audience with shared values and beliefs.<sup>177</sup> This was difficult for Harrison as he never had the chance to carry out his presidency and cement a national reputation and legacy. Further historical context reveals that the deaths of Harrison and President Zachary Taylor (1850) while in office, “two sitting presidents who were also military heroes in their own right, resulted in little emotional turmoil,” which somewhat contradicts the historical descriptions of the impacts of Harrison’s death. It may show that “something about the status of the presidency during the antebellum period, namely, that it had not yet attained the olympian level that was to characterize it from the Lincoln administration onward,” as the deaths of these presidents occurred before Lincoln “lifted the office of president to soaring symbolic heights.”<sup>178</sup> Zelinsky’s description of this sentiment provides a partial explanation as to why Harrison’s tomb may have fallen out of public memory, but the shift in the push to preserve it also occurred at a pivotal time in which civic leaders were gaining greater prominence within the American political and cultural landscape and certain reputational entrepreneurs sought to redefine Harrison’s reputational politics.

An added geographical complication in the case of Harrison is that many Cincinnatians are unaware of the fact that he is buried in North Bend or that there is even a tomb there, and that is even if they know who Harrison is at all. That the tomb has no markers on the nearby interstate or local highways and has only a single, small, simple sign just a few hundred feet down the road pointing to its location indicates the level of stature and esteem that the Harrison Tomb holds in the local landscape (Figure 10). So, unlike the monuments of many other significant historical figures, the Harrison Tomb is in a decidedly remote location, only augmenting his obscurity and perhaps inadvertently rendering him to inconsequentiality. To prevent this, it stands to reason that his tomb was recreated into a monument. But what about a monument for something that does not seem to fit the occasion, such as a monument for a president who never really got a chance to be president? Some presidents receive more recognition and are remembered more clearly than others, but this is not necessarily because they were better or more effective chief executives, and this incongruity is sometimes apparent through the landmarks and artifacts that commemorate them.

These points help explain my interest in this topic, because it is worth asking whether people are interested in Harrison because of who he was or because he was an anomaly. Another illustration of his unusual status in American history is that a substantial amount of memorabilia from the 1840 campaign, such as flags, lapel ribbons, pins and buttons, ceramics, cigar cases, and print items, much of which emphasizes the log cabin image, still survives and can command thousands of dollars from collectors.<sup>179</sup> Much of the appeal surrounding Harrison seems to be related to his obscurity. The repeated references to his one-month term throughout historical writings only focus more attention on this unusual fact and draw attention away from the man himself, despite his many other accomplishments and his important role in early American history. Given the history of the site, and the long process in giving it proper care and respect, did Harrison get a *presidential* monument only because people felt they owed it to him? “Regardless of whether greatness is judged by reputation, position, or accomplishment,” argues Foote, “there arises a sense that the achievements of these individuals [prominent people who died violently or accidentally] demand commemoration.”<sup>180</sup>





**Figure 10.** The sole sign pointing to the location of the Harrison Tomb, located in North Bend just slightly down the road from the site. Photo by author.

Significantly, it appears that Harrison's memory is also partly a victim of geography by its situation in an inopportune location. Post's study of John Brown's monuments in Kansas demonstrates how the location of some of Brown's monuments have a lower prominence in the landscape than others and therefore offer different contexts and perceptions of Brown for the public to debate, just as Harrison's various memorials in different locations honor him in disparate ways.<sup>182</sup> Even today, the Harrison Tomb site is fairly remote and somewhat hard to find; its location certainly only fed the ambivalence that so many felt for it until people began to take notice of its poor condition. Foote remarks on how landscape is intimately involved in the emergence of historical traditions: "Not only do these traditions become inscribed on the landscape in the form of memorials and monuments, but in many cases the condition of the sites themselves precipitates debate over what will be commemorated as part of these traditions."<sup>181</sup> But necessarily, time must pass before societies consider commemorating the past and commemorated sites go through a lengthy process of canonization; over time, it becomes easier to simplify the stories behind who or what we commemorate through a filtered view of the past after significant time passes.<sup>182</sup> Much of this point obviously links to potentially difficult reputations and the way that reputational entrepreneurs wish to portray the figures that they champion, but while it takes time to create a monument and decide how to commemorate someone, its care and upkeep are another matter.



It is my belief that Harrison should not be diminished simply because he succumbed to an illness and thus only served a short presidential tenure. Although his presidency was brief, I view it as a capstone to an otherwise long and accomplished life and his sudden death and the odd circumstances and ramifications that it brought about should not negate his entire life and career. While the effects of what his presidency would have been are uncertain, and there may be disagreements about his reputation, "there is no doubt that he had great impact on the history of the young republic" from his military career until he assumed the presidency.<sup>183</sup> Despite a lack of achievements while in the White House, too few people seem to realize or appreciate that the United States would not be what it is today had it not been for Harrison's role in American history, seeing that he played a major part in the early stages of shaping what we now call the Midwest. While he does not have the name recognition of most other presidents, and is now essentially an obscure character in national memory, he was a historically significant local, state, regional, and national figure, in addition to being commander-in-chief, and I submit that, as a member of that office and institution, Harrison deserves the same level of basic respect as other presidents.

Fortunately, the story behind his tomb has a happy ending in the sense that Harrison finally received a proper monument and it is currently well cared for; historical markers now permeate a once-dilapidated landscape full of overgrowth. The site is now well lit, landscaped, has security cameras, and has local police patrol the adjacent streets on their regular route. But this case study does highlight the sad trend across the United States for the lack of sufficient care, and sometimes even basic interest, in the preservation of monuments dedicated to prominent historical American figures. While reputational politics always surround prominent personalities, one should not underestimate the effects of ignorance and apathy on behalf of the wider public. Writing in 1912, local historian Reverend Charles Frederic Goss wrote it was the "shame of our great state [that the Harrison Tomb had been neglected]...and no true patriot can visit that lonely and (architecturally) hideous sepulchre without a feeling of pain."<sup>184</sup> He continued, saying "it is hard indeed to refrain from bitterness and denunciation [seeing the state of the tomb]...and contemplating our lack of appreciation for our local heroes."<sup>185</sup> And yet, excepting the brief period surrounding its formal memorialization, the tomb continued to deteriorate for several more decades following Goss's observation. While Harrison's biographies and examinations of his presidency or political career offer insightful and valuable information on these topics, few seem to give serious consideration to his legacy or even mention what happened after his body left Washington in 1841.

### **Landscape history and its potential for geography**

Given the movement to erect a proper monument for Harrison in the 1920s under the premise of honoring the president, the sincerity behind the motive is questionable because for sixty-plus years afterward, it fell into disrepair *again*, leaving the memory of an obscure president left to deteriorate in an obscure location. Interestingly, Harrison was remembered and forgotten in cycles, but without a more formal monument and prominent landscape feature, would he have been remembered at all? In some regards, his presidency was little more than a footnote, but that is no reason to let a presidential monument fall by the wayside and into decay for decades. Harrison may not have been an inconsequential personality, but society did seem to treat him that way. Hufbauer observes that in the context of presidential monuments, as memory fades, so does interest, and commemoration acts as an intercessor between death and societal memory.<sup>186</sup> Foote notes that it is common for memorial landscapes to take shape over long periods of time and the public interpretation and reception of these sites can vary with political, economic, social, and cultural changes through time.<sup>187</sup> Foote's observation and my case study help to affirm why a landscape history approach can be valid and insightful when studying memorials or many other types of landscapes.

This discussion of landscapes and artifacts, topics both popular and familiar within geography, illustrates another strand in the connections between geography and history by opening up the question regarding the treatment of public monuments to prominent historical figures and specifically to the inequality of treatment and memory of US presidents, an inequality that is often evident in the cultural landscape. Through this example, a geographical study utilizing landscape history reveals more than general historical or biographical sources and adds more to the story behind a major figure. Hopefully it illustrates an instance of how the re-adoption of landscape history could signify an important step toward creating a more coherent and balanced geographical approach to landscape.<sup>188</sup> "Through landscape history," argues Marcucci,

The issues, problems, and outcomes for a specific landscape can be reframed in a valid historical context. Enriching the popular perception of a changing landscape has the potential to alter the political willingness of a society for collective action directed at planning and managing the common landscape. Ultimately, this change of perception may result in a change of attitudes towards the land. Perhaps most importantly, the landscape history will change attitudes by educating people about the impact of human actions on the land and about the significance of place to the local culture.<sup>189</sup>

The story behind the Harrison Tomb illustrates Marcucci's points quite well, demonstrating the effects of both actions and inactions in preserving a landscape.

This study also demonstrates that landscape is not simply a reflection of the debate regarding historical reputation and legacy, but that the reputation or prominence of the memorial landscape itself can become part of the debate. The poor condition and maintenance of the Harrison Tomb for so many years prompted public concern over Harrison's neglected reputation. A full consideration of reputational politics must be sensitive not only to the social actors and issues at play in public memory, but also the spatial issues and factors at play in the landscape, both historically and in the present. Through this example of the Harrison Tomb, landscape history considers how the cycles of a memorial landscape's development, decline, and subsequent redevelopments can generate social and geographical change in debates and discussions of the past and what those meanings may infer in the present, as well as what new meanings they could carry in the future.<sup>190</sup> Foote states, "Landscape is more than a passive reflection of a nation's civil religion and symbolic totems. Landscape is the expressive medium, a forum for debate, within which these social values can be discussed actively and realized symbolically. Moreover the debate never ends."<sup>191</sup>

The stories behind landscapes, either natural or cultural, illustrate what landscape history can add to further geographical and historical research and, hopefully, create a stronger bond between the two. Moreover, I hope to pique other geographers' interest and encourage them to do more work in landscape history. Due to the dynamic nature of landscapes, their limitless varieties, their unconfined geographies, and the myriad ways in which scholars can interpret and reinterpret them through changing historical contexts, landscape history provides a virtually inexhaustible area of research for both past landscapes and the evolution of contemporary landscapes. Geographers' skills at landscape analysis and interpretation suggest that they could make significant and meaningful contributions to this not-fully-explored field of research by telling or helping others to tell the stories behind landscapes, and consequently creating a more complete picture of significant people and places. Historical geographers in particular have much to offer in such a field and the public (and also other disciplines) could gain much from their insights. As we see from the case of the Harrison Tomb, without an awareness of the landscape

and attention to the artifact that it houses, along with its meaning, historicity, and symbolic significance, the resting place of an American president might have fallen into even greater obscurity than the man it entombs.

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# Statecraft on the Eve of the Civil War: Influences on New Territories and States in the 36<sup>th</sup> U.S. Congress

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**ABSTRACT:** Regional jurisdiction (states, provinces, counties, etc.) is a crucial part of the governance of a country, and thus one would assume that great care is given to developing an optimal set of jurisdictional boundaries. However, the geometric simplicity of the boundaries of the western United States seems to defy the logic of the region's human and physical geography, suggesting that other forces have played a role in the production of political space in the West at pivotal times in its history. In particular, the 36<sup>th</sup> Congress (1859-61) changed the map of the West considerably just before the beginning of the Civil War, when the politics of slavery were at their height. Congressional bills, debates, and votes show that slavery did have a strong influence on the creation of new states and territories, but western geography was also very important. In particular, bills were generally introduced to the 36<sup>th</sup> Congress at the request of settlers, with boundaries that were motivated by geographic or regional factors. Conversely, votes on those bills tended to fall along the sharp party and sectional divisions that were driving the country apart. This paper analyzes the process of boundary making by governments through a consideration of the complex combination of geopolitical and regional forces that result in a final decision. The study period of the 36<sup>th</sup> Congress included the creation of three new territories and a new state, as well as myriad intriguing but unsuccessful proposals.

## Introduction

The boundaries of states are an important part of the governance of the United States. Border locations have influenced transportation infrastructure, the provision of services, economic wealth, and political power, both positively and negatively. It would seem that the geometric boundaries that are predominant in the western United States are less "rational" than those that follow natural divisions in human or physical geography, but things are not that simple. Perhaps there are situations where straight lines were the best solution. To understand the current political geography of the American West, we need to understand the process by which the states and territories were originally created in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, because the boundaries have changed very rarely since they were first drawn. Multiple attempts to "fix" boundaries have failed, and the U.S. has not seen a significant state boundary change since the division of Dakota in 1889.

This paper focuses on the 36<sup>th</sup> Congress, from late 1859 to early 1861, which admitted Kansas as a state and created Nevada, Colorado, and Dakota Territories, thus making more jurisdictional changes than any other two-year period in Western American history, and introducing many boundary lines still in use today. In contrast, several significant proposals were not enacted, including territorial status for Arizona, a North-South division of California, the elimination of Utah Territory, and statehood for Utah, New Mexico, and Nebraska. This leads us to ask two questions: why did some proposals become law while others didn't; and why were the boundaries drawn where they were?

## The nature of territory

These are not new questions. Governments have to grapple with similar issues whenever new boundaries are drawn, so any general theory of the process is desirable. Political scientists and political geographers have studied the nature of territory and boundaries throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>1</sup> The vast majority of past work has focused on international boundaries,<sup>2</sup> but some of the same principles can be applied to how governments divide their land into smaller units, such as territories, states, provinces, and counties.

The literature has followed several related themes concerning how territory is seen by both the residents in territories and by those in the central government. Generally, these themes align with four broad conceptual principles:

- *Principle 1. Territory is an identity:*<sup>3</sup> home is a part of who we are. A collective homeland helps bind a group of people (especially cultural and ethnic nationalities) together, even if they do not currently live there.<sup>4</sup> The status of that homeland as a territory, state, independent country, or having no distinct government at all can influence how the group's inherent status is perceived by themselves and others.<sup>5</sup>
- *Principle 2. Territory is a resource:*<sup>6</sup> the subordinate governments require capital to operate, and part of that capital can be derived from the land and its contents, whether from natural resources (e.g. minerals, water), economic development (e.g. agriculture, retail, industry), or tax-paying residents. The value of land based on potential revenue is not homogeneous, but in general, more is better.<sup>7</sup>
- *Principle 3. Territory is a service area:* a government is expected to provide services for the land and its inhabitants, including infrastructure, education, environmental management, regulation, and many more.<sup>8</sup> If the cost (financial, political, etc.) to service an area is greater than its potential value, the state-to-be may wish to cede the area, as had recently happened with Oregon and Minnesota. Meanwhile, inhabitants of regions that are remote from the capital may feel that they can service themselves more effectively.
- *Principle 4. Territory is political capital:* the land contains voting citizens, who collectively can have great political power. When the territory functions as a unit of governmental representation, and the distribution of citizens with differing views is not even, as in the slave and free states in 1860, or the "red states" and "blue states" of today, then boundaries become very important in either empowering or marginalizing people.<sup>9</sup>

As we explore how the subdivision of the West proceeded between 1859 and 1861, we are in effect attempting to divine the thought processes of the members of the 36<sup>th</sup> Congress. What was each legislator trying to accomplish by his actions? In this situation, and many similar situations before and since, policy makers are tasked with building a political geography that accommodates the interests of the local community, the interests of the country at large, and of course their own personal interests.

Based on the principles of territory listed above, these interests are of two types that we designate "Political factors" and "Regional factors." *Political factors* (based on Principles 1, 2, and 4) promote the political aspirations of the territorial residents and/or those of members of Congress. These factors include such goals as: the desire for self-rule by a distinct population group, the clout that comes from the governmental status of a region (whether state, territory, periphery of a larger territory, or completely unorganized), trying to gain more representatives from one's own party or section of the country, and using boundaries to unify or divide distinct groups to control their influence in government (as is often an ulterior motive of congressional redistricting).<sup>10</sup> *Regional*

factors (based on Principles 1 and 3) increase the effectiveness and efficiency of governance by creating territories that conform to preexisting physical, cultural, or functional regions. The latter factors include minimizing the cost of traveling to the capital, drawing boundaries along physical barriers like mountains or rivers, or keeping tight-knit cultural groups together within a territory, akin to the fundamental principle of the nation-state.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, our earlier research questions can be rephrased as, “to what degree did each of these types of factors influence the final outcome?”

### *Previous studies of the subdivision of the Western United States*

We are not the first to seek to understand the historical political geography of this region and this time period. Historians and geographers have discussed the antebellum West at length. Meinig even goes so far as to develop a general model of settlement in the Western United States,<sup>12</sup> which asserts that regional factors were generally dominant; that is, regions became territories and states at about the time and in about the shape they needed. Although it provides a strong foundation, this model cannot fully explain the activities of 1860 and 1861. Further, in his seminal *Making of America* series, Meinig discusses congressional philosophies and actions concerning statecraft throughout the history of the United States, from Jefferson’s predilection for geometric boundaries in the Northwest Territory through the debate over Kansas statehood in 1858. However, the actions of the 36<sup>th</sup> Congress are only briefly mentioned as having occurred “with little controversy.”<sup>13</sup> Other historical geographies of the West have generally followed suit.<sup>14</sup>

Regional historians, when describing the creation of their own states, have often relied on arguments related to local pride. These histories often portray the territorial desires of settlers as rational and justified in the sense of regional factors as defined here, while Congress knows and cares little about the area and makes decisions primarily on political grounds.<sup>15</sup> A notable exception is Mark Stegmaier’s analysis of the New Mexico statehood proposal considered below, in which he thoroughly looks at the statements and actions of both Congress and the New Mexicans.<sup>16</sup>

Historians of the antebellum United States often discuss the debate over the extension of slavery into the territories,<sup>17</sup> but the focus is often on events before 1859, such as the compromises of 1820 and 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, and the Kansas statehood (under the Lecompton Constitution) debates of 1858, then skipping over the 36<sup>th</sup> Congress to the presidential election of 1860 and the secession crisis. Those that do mention the new state and territories do not attempt to explain the underlying rationale.<sup>18</sup> Generally, the primary thesis is that political factors were dominant in the decisions to make new territories, in direct contrast to Meinig.

### **The setting in 1859**

To better understand the actions of the 36<sup>th</sup> Congress, we need to consider the situation its members faced in Washington and in the West as they convened in December 1859. A variety of geographic and political issues framed the decision-making process that followed.

### *Settlement in the West*

It is clear that boundary making would not have been an issue in Congress had not the expanding settlements of the western territories pressed the point. The Congress arrived in Washington to find a variety of proposals for territorial changes already before them. The growth of settlement in four western territories led citizens to request statehood. Newly emergent settlement cores were requesting their own territories. These requests, and the distribution of settlements (according to the 1860 Census), are shown in Figure 1 and Table 1. It should be noted that the 36<sup>th</sup> Congress did not know very much about this distribution; results of the Census were not available until late in the second session of the 36<sup>th</sup> Congress, and even then its accuracy is sometimes doubted.<sup>19</sup> Still, the map gives a useful picture of where people lived in the West.





**Figure 1.** Status of territories at the beginning of the 36th Congress, distribution of settlement (Europeans and urbanized Native Americans) according to the 1860 Census, and boundaries requested by the provisional territories of Colorado, Nevada, Arizona, Jefferson, and Dakota.

The *de facto* standard for admission as a state was a population large enough to qualify for a seat in the House of Representatives, although Congress occasionally made exceptions in cases such as Oregon, Florida, and later Nevada. The 1850 Census had set that standard at seventy-six thousand, while the 1860 Census would soon increase it to ninety-three thousand, which Kansas and New Mexico met. In anticipation of this, the Kansans had drafted their fourth attempt at a state constitution at Wyandotte, this time as a free state,<sup>20</sup> while the New Mexicans waited for permission from Congress. Nebraska and Utah also requested admission as states, the latter still hoping for the name “Deseret,” but both were in fact far too thinly populated. Only the new Washington Territory made no request of the 36<sup>th</sup> Congress.

In addition to the established cores, several new population centers had appeared in the West in recent years. These included towns set up by land companies, such as Denver and several in southeastern Dakota; mining camps in the Front Range, the Carson Valley, and Tucson; the farming region of the Mesilla Valley in southern New Mexico; and the trading post of Pembina in northern Dakota. After years of attempting to participate in the distant governments of their respective territories, it was clear to them that they were too isolated to be governed effectively.<sup>21</sup> In fact, Dakota had no official governance after the rest of Minnesota Territory was admitted in 1858.<sup>22</sup>

Several of these nascent regions had asked for a new territory in 1858, but the 35<sup>th</sup> Congress took no action. Upon failure, each of the four major regions created an unofficial provisional

Region	Population	Government	Request
Arizona (Mesilla)	6,239	Provisional	Territory
Arizona (Tucson)	6,482		
California (North)	353,161*	State	none
California (South)	26,833	part of California	Territory
Front Range (Colorado)	35,682**	Provisional	Territory
Dakota (Pembina)	3,630	Provisional	Territory
Dakota (South)	1,047		
Kansas (w/o Colorado)	107,206*	Territory	Statehood
Nebraska (w/o Colorado)	27,076	Territory	Statehood
Carson Valley (Nevada)	6,857	Provisional	Territory
New Mexico without Arizona:	93,516* 80,795	Territory	Statehood
Oregon	52,465	State	none
Utah (without Nevada)	40,273***	Territory	Statehood
Washington:	10,598	Territory	none

\* Sufficient for statehood (93,400 required for single house representative)

\*\* Questionable: includes nonexistent towns

\*\*\* Questionable: 1856 territorial estimates (also questionable) claimed 76,335; Wahlquist (1978) estimated 47,000 using demographic statistics

**Table 1.** Status of western settlement regions in 1859, with 1860 Census population.

government, as had most other states and territories in the West,<sup>23</sup> a tradition dating all the way back to the unsuccessful state of Franklin that preceded Kentucky.<sup>24</sup> The residents of the Carson Valley chose the name Nevada, those on the Front Range called themselves Jefferson, the Mesilla and Tucson areas formed Arizona, and Dakota included the area removed from Minnesota. Figure 1 shows that each provisional government claimed an extensive area for its new territory, quite different from its eventual boundaries.<sup>25</sup>

Another home-rule movement was occurring in sparsely settled Southern California, which felt neglected by the more populous North with its distant capital at Sacramento. In response, the state legislature passed an enabling act for a new territory to be called Colorado that was supported overwhelmingly by a referendum of the Southern voters.<sup>26</sup> However, ceding land from an existing state to a federal territory also required an act of Congress, so a memorial was sent to Washington for approval.

It is important to note that the proposed territories of Jefferson, Arizona, and Colorado all had the vocal support of the legislatures that then governed them (respectively, Kansas, New Mexico, and California). Each of these governments realized the difficulty of governing a region that was both different in its character and remote from the capital (one of our regional factors), and was willing to cede these areas. Only Utah maintained a firm claim on the Carson Valley.

### *Cultural attitudes*

When politicians consider creating governments and drawing their boundaries, settlement geography cannot be the only factor considered. The actions must fit within a larger political and cultural context, since forces that have little to do with geography often have a profound impact on geographic actions. Among the territorial issues in 1859 was public opinion of the Mormons (and their practice of polygamy) in Utah, and the Mexican-Americans of New Mexico.

**Mormon Sentiments:** Brigham Young and the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had sought security in isolation in Utah, but this also bred misunderstanding and distrust. Easterners speculated wildly on what was going on in Utah, focusing primarily on polygamy and supposed rebellion against federal officials (despite a peaceful end to the Utah War in 1857). Many members of Congress saw it as their duty to eliminate polygamy, if not the Church itself. In fact, Republicans had made the removal of “the twin relics of barbarism: slavery and polygamy” from the territories as a core part of their 1856 presidential platform.<sup>27</sup>

**Hispanic Sentiments:** The Hispanic people of California and New Mexico, U.S. citizens since joining the United States in 1848, were rarely treated as peers by Anglos. In congressional speeches, they were still often called “Mexicans,” and were often stereotyped as uneducated, backward people who could not speak English, did not know how to run a proper government, and had mixed loyalties for their former and present country.<sup>28</sup>

### *The 36<sup>th</sup> Congress and slavery*

The fractious 1858 election had created a Congress that was polarized to a degree seldom matched,<sup>29</sup> especially on the question of the extension of slavery into the territories. Admitting a state is a consequential decision, the only congressional act that cannot be repealed, and is thus worthy of careful consideration.<sup>30</sup> A state theoretically had the sovereign right to choose whether to allow or prohibit slavery when it wrote its constitution, but the status of slaves in a territory was the prerogative of Congress. The eventual slave or free status of the future western states could easily tip the delicate sectional balance in Congress, so both sides wanted more states on their side. An unofficial *quid pro quo* pattern of admitting free-slave pairs of new states had existed since 1820, but after the acquisitions of 1846-1853, the United States had much more northern territory than southern in the West, pushing the slavery issue into the fore.

Four clear congressional factions had gradually formed during the 1850s, defined primarily by their stance toward territorial slavery (Table 2, Figures 2 and 3). The Republican Party, strongest in the Northeast and northern Midwest and led by Senator William H. Seward (New York), had been created in 1854, largely from the anti-slavery wing of the Whig Party, to fight against the extension of slavery into the territories.<sup>31</sup> At the other extreme, Democrats from the slave states, led by senator and future confederate president Jefferson Davis (Mississippi), demanded that a slaveholding settler’s “rights and property” be protected in the territories. Neither group was monolithic, containing both hard-liners who would rather the Union break

	1860 House	1861 House	1860 Senate	1861 Senate
Republicans	113	115	26	26
Democrats (South)	66	38	27	15
Democrats (North)	34	33	10	10
Americans/ Opposition/ Unionists (South)	24	22	2	2

**Table 2.** Voting Blocs at the beginning and end of the 36th Congress.

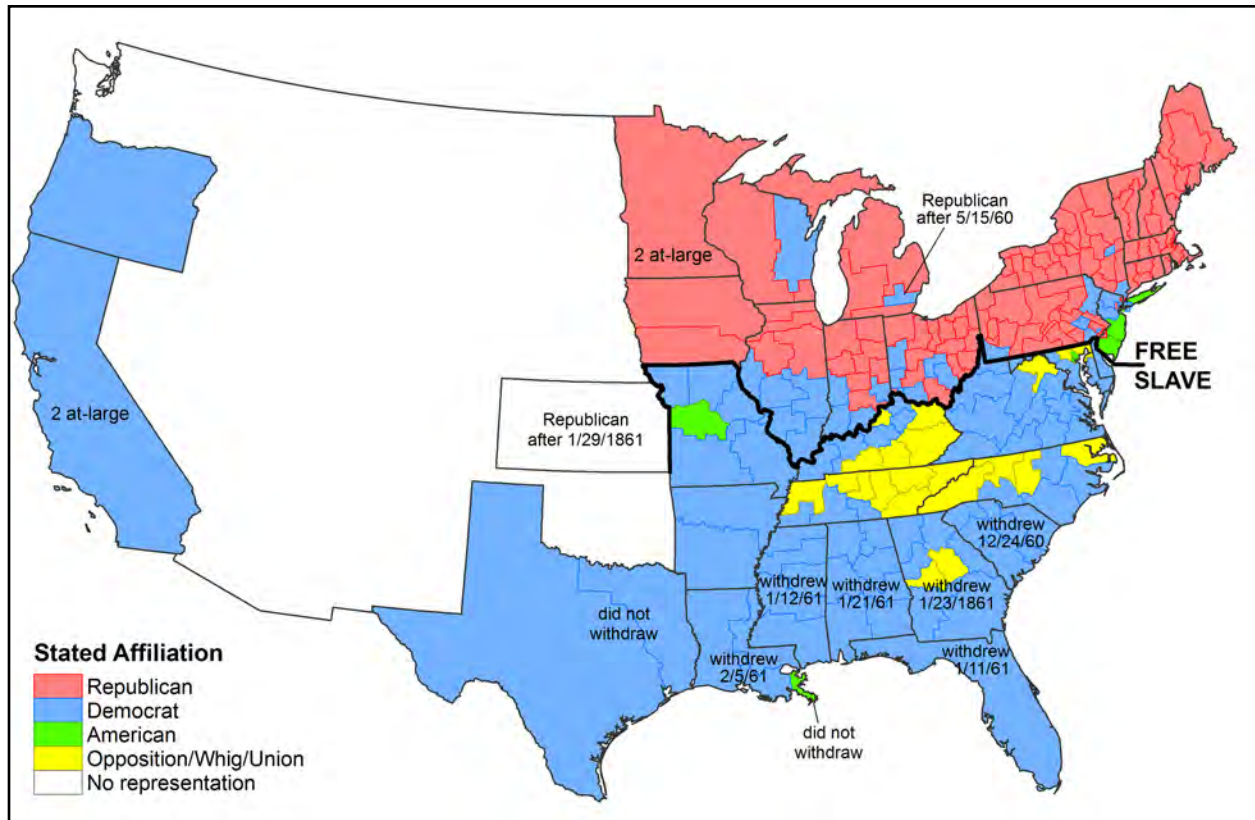


Figure 2. Political makeup of the 36th House of Representatives.

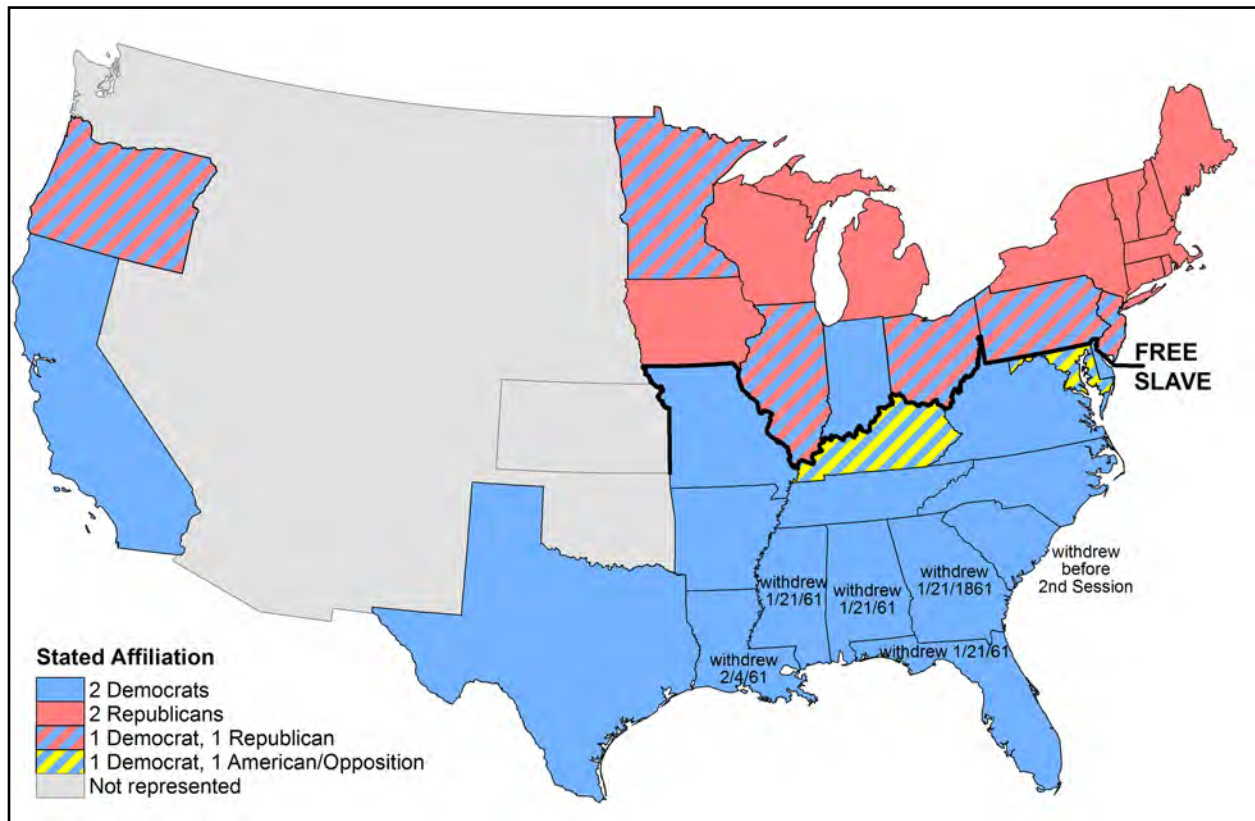


Figure 3. Political makeup of the 36th Senate.



up than consider compromise, and moderates who could be conciliatory as long as they did not have to sacrifice their core principles.

Between the Republicans and the Southern Democrats were two moderate camps that saw the others as too extreme, but differed over the proper form of compromise on the issue of territorial slavery. The Northern Democrats, strongest in the southern Midwest and the Mid-Atlantic cities, and led by Senator Stephen A. Douglas (Illinois), favored popular sovereignty, in which territories could choose their own stance on slavery, as expressed in the Compromise of 1850 and the Kansas-Nebraska Act.<sup>32</sup> The final faction was not an organized party. The Southern Opposition, or Southern Unionists, primarily consisted of border-state remnants of the Whig and American (Know-Nothing) parties. Led by Senator John J. Crittenden (Kentucky), they considered themselves the ideological successors of the Kentucky Whig Henry Clay, and felt that Congress needed to take a firm, but moderate, stand similar to Clay's Missouri Compromise of 1820.<sup>33</sup>

The four groups had become so entrenched by 1859 that they tended to vote as blocs on most votes, even those unrelated to slavery.<sup>34</sup> While the votes of the Republicans and Southern Democrats were generally predictable, the two moderate groups were important swing blocs that could change the outcome in both chambers. In the 1858 elections, the Republicans gained a plurality in the House, while the Democrats held a slim majority in the Senate. The secessions of 1861 eventually gave the Republicans a majority in the Senate and complete control of the House.

### **Actions of the 36<sup>th</sup> Congress**

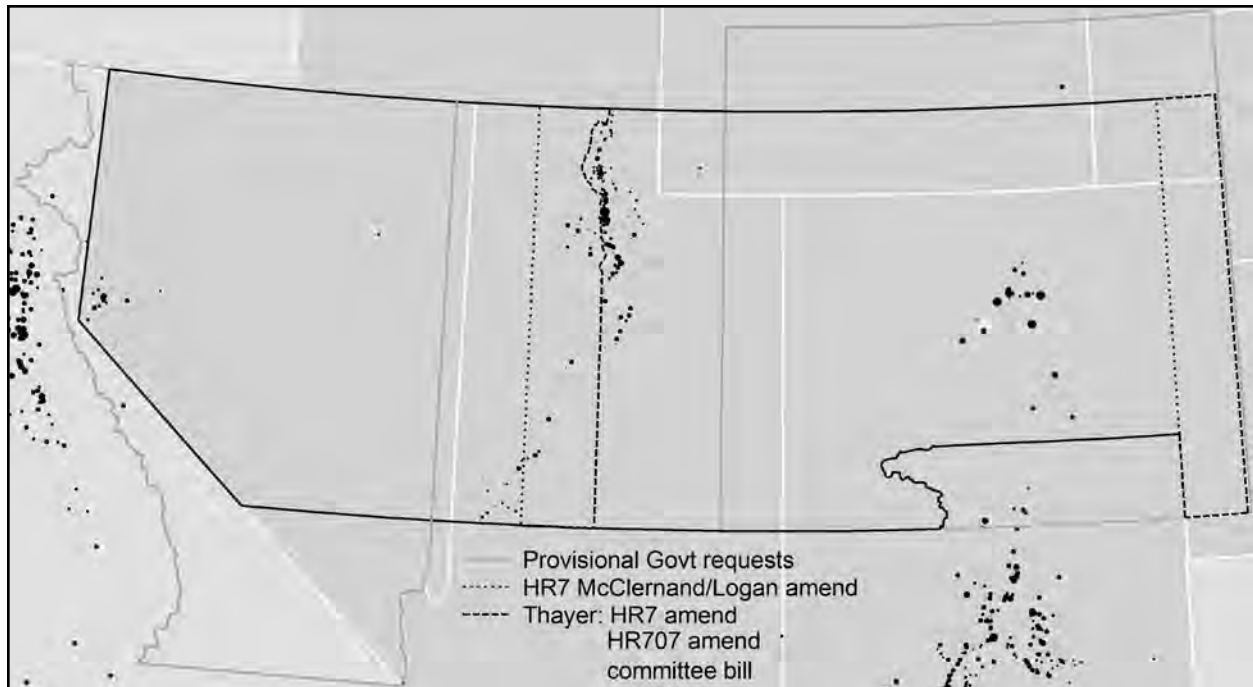
To really understand the causes of the acts of the 36<sup>th</sup> Congress, one would have to know the thoughts of each congressman. In lieu of this, we evaluated three secondary indicators of their motivations: their discussions and debates as reported in the *Congressional Globe*, their votes as recorded in the *House* and *Senate Journals*, and the geography of the boundaries sought in bills that were or were not enacted.<sup>35</sup>

#### ***Initial bills***

In response to these requests, a variety of bills were introduced in the House and Senate and referred to the territorial committees, chaired by Galusha Grow (R-PA) in the House and James Green (D-MO) in the Senate. In December 1859, Jefferson Davis introduced a Senate bill for Arizona Territory (S. 24) (calling it Arizuma) that was supported by President Buchanan in his State of the Union address.<sup>36</sup> A Nevada Territory bill (S. 44), a resolution to create Dakota, the Colorado cession memorial from California, and a Kansas statehood bill (S. 194) were also introduced in the Senate.<sup>37</sup> In the House, bills were introduced in February 1860 for Kansas statehood (H.R. 23), Arizona Territory (H.R. 192), Nevada Territory (H.R. 202), Nebraska statehood (H.R. 209), and Dakota Territory (H.R. 611).<sup>38</sup> In addition, alternative proposals were introduced to annex southern Dakota to Iowa (H.R. 157) or Nebraska; to annex El Paso, Texas to New Mexico (H.R. 196); and to annex Carson Valley to California (H.R. 419).<sup>39</sup>

Of all the above bills, only H.R. 23 (Kansas) eventually emerged from committee.<sup>40</sup> It is not clear what happened to the rest, due to the lack of surviving committee documentation,<sup>41</sup> but it appears that the annexation and Nebraska statehood proposals were dropped with little consideration, while the territorial bills were redrafted by the House and Senate committees.

Although the division of California may have been the most intriguing proposal of all (in terms of "what if" scenarios) and had significant support in California, it also died in committee. During debates on the other territories, Green twice mentioned that the Senate Committee refused to consider it because of constitutional questions regarding creating a federal territory from a sovereign state.<sup>42</sup> Although this was a valid issue, the slave question almost certainly was a consideration. Colorado (whatever its eventual name) would be



**Figure 4.** House proposals to eliminate Utah Territory by partitioning it between Jefferson (Colorado) and Nevada, made by John Logan (D-IL), John McClernand (D-IL), and Eli Thayer (R-MA), April 1860.

changing from a free state, to a *southern* territory. The last thing Congress wanted was an additional federal territory in which the slavery question would have to be dealt with again.

#### *Mormons and the Utah question*

While the territorial committees considered and redesigned these territorial bills during March and April 1860, the House debated H.R. 7, a proposal from Justin Morrill (R-VT) to eliminate polygamy in Utah. H.R. 7 would outlaw polygamy and punish the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the Utah Legislature for allowing it, but more drastic measures were also considered. During his campaign against Abraham Lincoln in 1858, Stephen A. Douglas had suggested solving the “polygamy problem” by eliminating Utah Territory and partitioning the Mormons between the surrounding territories.<sup>43</sup> Representatives John Logan and John McClernand, fellow Illinois Democrats, offered just such an amendment to H.R. 7, proposing to partition Utah between new Nevada and Jefferson (Colorado) territories as shown in Figure 4; Eli Thayer (R-MA) unsuccessfully tried to introduce a similar division three times.<sup>44</sup> A third alternative punishment, creating a federally appointed territorial legislature, was also offered as an amendment.

The partitioning proposals aimed to divide the fifty thousand Mormons in half, so they would be the minority in each of the new mining-dominated territories. In defending his proposal, McClernand stated that once they had been stripped of political power, “they would probably pass out of our jurisdiction into Mexico or the British territories [Canada].”<sup>45</sup> During the debate, most speakers approved of disenfranchising the Mormons, but differed on whether the plan would work. Supporters assumed that the miner populations at the east and west ends of Utah were larger and growing faster than the Mormons, while the few opponents who mentioned it said that the Mormon population was large enough to easily dominate both new territories (which the 1860 Census would soon confirm), and that it was better to keep them all in one



voter turnout, since the 1860 Census had not yet been taken. Democratic opponents also made regional and legal arguments, as summarized by Daniel Gooch of Massachusetts:

- The first is, that the people of Kansas, in framing and adopting the Wyandotte constitution, acted in violation of law; [i.e., the English Bill of 1858, which required an official population count prior to Kansas admission]
- the second, that the population of Kansas is insufficient;
- the third, that the boundaries in the Wyandotte constitution violate certain treaties which this government has made with Indian tribes;
- and the fourth is . . . that this constitution permits foreigners . . . to vote. [an issue only for the few nativist American Party representatives]<sup>47</sup>

Despite the fact that the spoken words of the debate focused on regional factors, every argument against statehood was made by a southerner, and every supporting argument by a northerner, with some mixing of views by those from the border states. This is clear evidence of the overriding influence of slavery politics. One piece of evidence of the insincerity of the regional-factor rhetoric was that both sides had made the exact opposite arguments when debating the pro-slavery Leecompton constitution for Kansas in 1858. Also, some congressmen suggested that the real reason for the concern over the Indian treaties was that they contained indirect protections of slavery rights.<sup>48</sup> The final hint of the congressmen's real motivations was on April 11, when the bill passed the house on a nearly perfect sectional vote, as shown in Table 4. The lack of explicit slavery discussion in the public debates was probably for two reasons: first, there was little point in restating one's views on slavery since the sectional lines had been drawn on Kansas in 1858. Second, southerners believed in state sovereignty, so they could not reject Kansas solely on its anti-slavery constitution. Several stated that they had obligingly voted for free-constitution Oregon and Minnesota in the previous congress, although they may have voted for Oregon simply because of the dominance of the Democratic Party there.<sup>49</sup>

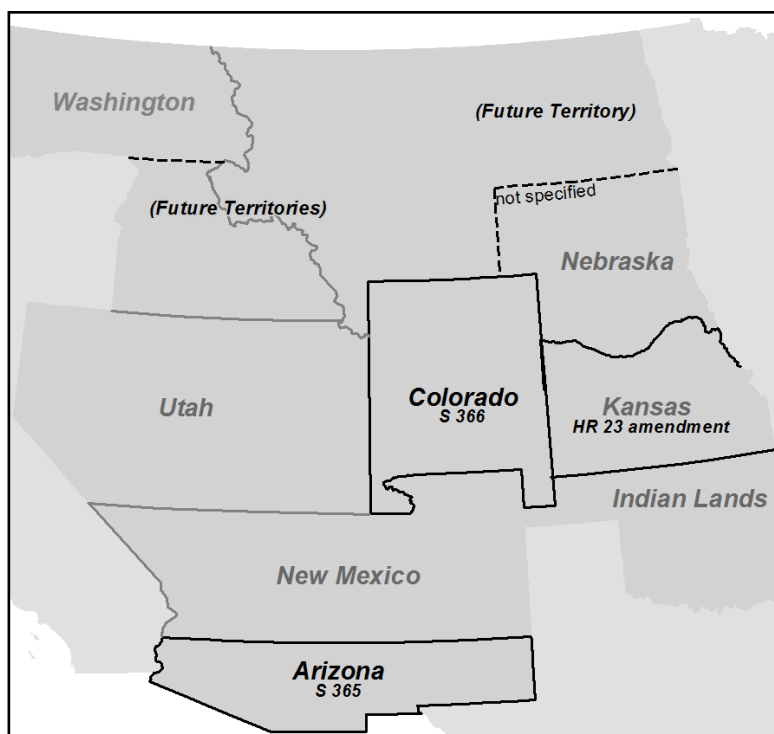
	Voters	NO	percent	YES	percent
<b>Republican</b>	102	101	99%	1	1%
<b>So Dem</b>	50	38	76%	12	24%
<b>No Dem</b>	24	2	8%	22	92%
<b>Opposition</b>	20	19	95%	1	5%

**Table 3.** House vote on H.R. 7 Logan/McClermand amend (partition Utah), Apr. 5, 1860.

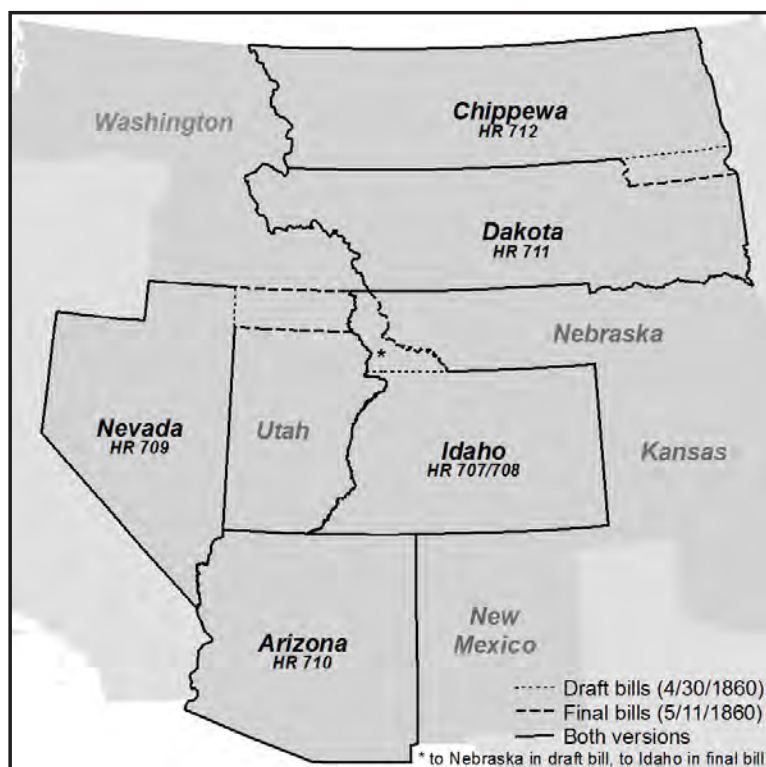
	Voters	NO	percent	YES	percent
<b>Republican</b>	105	0	0%	105	100%
<b>So Dem</b>	51	50	98%	1	2%
<b>No Dem</b>	29	3	10%	26	90%
<b>Opposition</b>	22	20	91%	2	9%

**Table 4.** House vote on H.R. 23 (Kansas Statehood), Apr. 11, 1860.





**Figure 6.** Territorial plan of James Green (D-MO) and the Senate Committee on Territories during the first session of the 36th Congress, as laid out in bills S. 365, S. 366, and a speech on June 5, 1860.



**Figure 7.** Initial proposal from the House Committee on Territories, May 1860 (H.R. 707-712).

On April 3, 1860, Green introduced new Senate bills for Arizona (S. 365) and Colorado (S. 366). As shown in Figure 6, the Arizona bill gave the citizens the boundaries they desired,<sup>50</sup> while the Colorado bill went further north than the current state (as requested by the provisional government), but cut off less of Utah and none of New Mexico. However, the Senate was busy with other matters, and the bills would have to wait several months for debate.

Grow and the House Committee on Territories had grander designs, drafting bills to create five new territories, adding “Chippewa” (North Dakota) to the four requests (H.R. 707-712), as shown in Figure 7. Comparing the boundaries of these bills with an earlier set of drafts found in the committee minutes<sup>51</sup> show that Grow and the other committee members had put some time and effort into drawing the boundaries, which would have been drastically different from the 1861 acts; Nevada was actually more similar to its current shape than the final 1861 boundary, except for a northern panhandle that was never explained. Arizona was divided from New Mexico differently than other contemporary proposals, but close to what it would eventually look like in 1863. It is also the first mention of a massive Dakota, acquiring the unsettled (by whites) northern plains from Nebraska.

On May 10, Grow reported H.R. 707 to create “Idaho” (Colorado), which was postponed.<sup>52</sup> On the next day, he re-reported the Idaho bill as H.R. 708, along with the others. In his report, Grow stated that the new settlement areas were too far from existing capitals to be governed effectively (especially the protection from Native Americans, and the rule of law), and needed immediate attention. However, all of the bills were tabled with little debate.<sup>53</sup> Only the Chippewa bill (H.R. 710) garnered much discussion, as congressmen on both sides were skeptical that anyone lived there. Although the Minnesotans and some others were aware of the settlement at Pembina, few realized that it was larger than all the southern Dakota towns combined. In addition, Eli Thayer spoke at length on his stand against all federal territories, preferring provisional self-government prior to statehood.

The votes to table H.R. 707-712 paint an interesting picture, passing with a unanimous bloc of Southern and Northern Democrats and the Southern Opposition (Table 5), and also several Republicans, for different reasons. First, the bills banned slavery, anathema both to the slave states and the non-interventionist Northern Democrats. The Republican defectors were primarily Thayer and his supporters.

Although all of the Senate and House bills failed, they are important to understanding the mindset of the members of Congress. The various drafted boundaries, the public debates, and the voting patterns are all evidence of the consideration of different political and regional factors.

The first session ended in June 1860, with no action concerning the territories, but it was very clear during the autumn election season that this issue was contributing to the crisis the country was facing. In one of the most fractious presidential campaigns in the country’s history, each of the factions nominated their own candidate: Lincoln for the Republicans, Douglas for the Northern Democrats, the sitting vice president John Breckinridge for the Southern Democrats, and former Tennessee senator John Bell for the Constitutional Union Party (an ephemeral

	Voters	All NO	Percent	Mixed	percent	All YES	Percent
<b>Republican</b>	95	83	87%	3	4%	9	9%
<b>So Dem</b>	55	0	0%	0	0%	55	100%
<b>No Dem</b>	28	0	0%	0	0%	28	100%
<b>Opposition</b>	20	0	0%	0	0%	20	100%

**Table 5.** House votes to table H.R. 707, 708, 709 (territories), May 11-12, 1860

organization of the whiggish Opposition in the Upper South, which found hope in a unionist platform). Each stated a strong position on the territorial question: Republicans for banning territorial slavery, Southern Democrats for protecting it, Northern Democrats for popular sovereignty, and the Unionists, who considered themselves the successors to Henry Clay, for a re-establishment of the Missouri Compromise of 1820 and its slave/free territorial division at 36°30' N.

### *Second session*

When Congress returned for the second session in December after the election, it was clear that Lincoln's victory had accelerated the crisis. South Carolina did not officially secede until December 20, but its representatives never returned to Congress. Other Deep South congressmen returned, but even moderate Southern Democrats like Jefferson Davis, who wanted the Union to stay together, stated that it was probably too late for compromise, and would gladly depart with their states if the demands of the South were not met.<sup>54</sup> In contrast, the newly minted Unionists returned more unified and optimistic about the possibility of union-saving compromise, the Bell ticket having won three states, but were also the most fearful among the four factions of the disastrous consequences of not compromising.<sup>55</sup> Green and Grow intended to continue their agenda, but had little success.

Grow's House Committee on Territories created a new set of territorial bills (H.R. 887-890) for the second session. The proposed boundaries were changed somewhat from the earlier bills, as shown in Figure 8, especially the merger of Chippewa and Dakota, a shift in the New Mexico/Arizona Border and a significant enlargement of the Nebraska panhandle. The bills were printed, but were never introduced to the floor. Also, the 1856 Deseret (Utah) state constitution was re-introduced in the House December 31, and referred to committee, where it promptly died.<sup>56</sup>

Meanwhile, the Senate opened the second session by returning to the consideration of Kansas statehood (H.R. 23), which it had debated for only a few days at the end of the previous session. It was the subject of constant and heated debate for the next two months, following the



**Figure 8.** Second proposal from the House Committee on Territories, printed in December 1860 (H.R. 887-890), but never officially introduced.

same script as in the House: legal and regional-factor arguments (e.g. population) divided along sectional lines. However, once the 1860 Census returns showed Kansas to have one hundred seven thousand residents, which was more than enough for a seat in the House, most of the South's arguments evaporated.<sup>57</sup>

One additional proposal was an amendment offered by Green to change the Kansas boundaries, as shown in Figure 6. Although he justified the new western boundary proposed by the Kansas citizens as an even division of an uninhabitable desert, he wanted to move the southern boundary north of Indian lands and the northern boundary to the Platte River. Green justified the southern shift as a compromise to avoid the treaty infringement arguments, while also compensating for the lost farmland and population with the northern shift that was also a more visible boundary than where it then was (and now is).<sup>58</sup> This would have taken more than half of the Nebraska population, which Green proposed to compensate by annexing southern Dakota to Nebraska.<sup>59</sup> During the debates, opponents of the amendment generally agreed with the rationale, but did not feel it was serious enough to warrant opening a new boundary debate.

In January 1861, Green offered a second amendment—a rider to create Jefferson Territory. This was intended to avoid the situation in Dakota that resulted from the admission of Minnesota, in case a reduced Kansas was enacted, but not a separate Colorado Territory bill. Both amendments were defeated,<sup>60</sup> but the bill easily passed the Senate on January 21, and was signed on January 29, 1861.<sup>61</sup>

The Senate vote (Table 6) showed the same sectional vote as the House: 34-0 from the North, 2-16 from the South. The only two defections were Crittenden of Kentucky and future president Andrew Johnson of Tennessee, leaders of the Unionist faction who likely wanted to demonstrate that common sense should trump sectional politics.

### *Special committees*

As South Carolina was seceding in December 1860, both the Senate and House created special committees to devise a solution to the slavery question in order to save the Union. The Senate committee considered many options, including the "Crittenden Compromise," a package introduced by the Kentucky Unionist that included extending the 1820 Missouri Compromise line (36°30' N) through New Mexico Territory (but without any mention of altering territorial boundaries), and a proposal by Henry M. Rice of Minnesota to create a state of "Washington" from all the remaining territory north of 36° 30' N, and "Jefferson" from the area to the south (Figure 9). His justification was that since states have the right to choose their slavery status, it would no longer be the concern of Congress. He acknowledged that the states would be unmanageably large, but he believed that they would divide themselves into several states as practical (although this had never happened before or since). It was offered and voted down on December 28, along with every other proposal of the committee.<sup>62</sup> Rice later proposed another solution to the entire Senate, dividing the northern territories between the existing states (plus new states Kansas and New Mexico), as shown in Figure 9, but he tabled it himself until other options were exhausted.<sup>63</sup>

The House special committee was more successful, creating five resolutions that it reported to the House, including Crittenden's extended Missouri Compromise line, and an enabling act

	Voters	NO	percent	YES	percent
<b>Republican</b>	26	0	0%	26	100%
<b>So Dem</b>	16	15	94%	1	6%
<b>No Dem</b>	8	0	0%	8	100%
<b>Unionist</b>	2	1	50%	1	50%

**Table 6.** Senate vote on H.R. 23 (Kansas Statehood), Jan. 21, 1861.





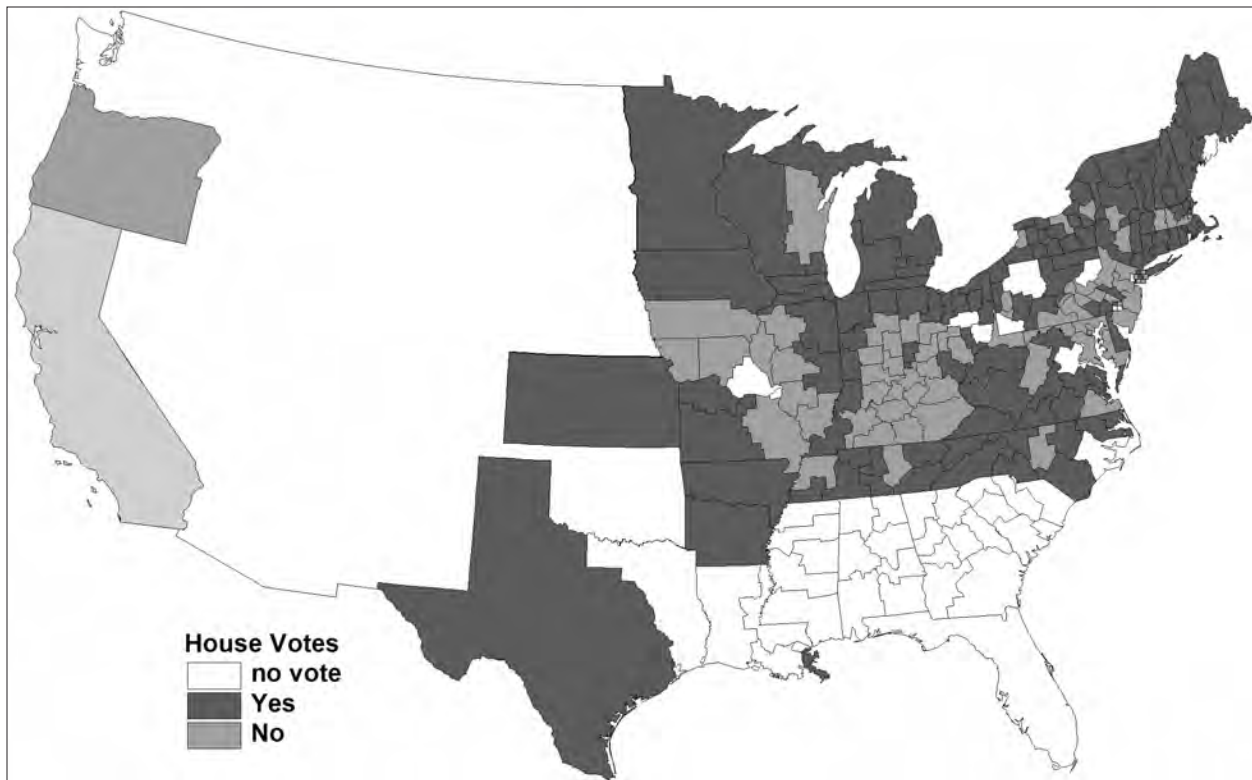
**Figure 9.** Compromise proposals of Senator H. M. Rice (D-MN), introduced during the second session.

for New Mexico statehood, allowing the residents to choose their slavery status.<sup>64</sup> During the committee debate, this was explicitly intended as a *quid pro quo* for a free Kansas, but once Kansas was recognized as a *fait accompli*, the direct connection was dropped.

The proposals were debated almost every afternoon and evening for the remainder of the session; an astounding eighty-seven congressmen (half the house) gave hour-long speeches, notably excepting New Mexico's own delegate, Miguel Otero. Although New Mexico statehood did not garner nearly as much discussion as the other committee proposals, it was frequently mentioned. Both sides often discussed regional factors, usually concerning the population (supporters usually giving an estimate of one hundred five thousand that turned out to be accurate, detractors usually estimating seventy-five thousand), and the potential economic viability of the desert landscape. Many on both sides stereotyped the residents (often referred to as "Mexicans," even though they were U.S. citizens) as potentially disloyal or too uneducated to govern themselves.<sup>65</sup>

However, most comments (for and against) were related to the possibility of adding a slave (or possibly free) state. A group of conciliatory Republicans, including Seward and Charles Francis Adams of Massachusetts, had created the proposal to woo Southerners, saying that it would probably choose slavery due to its existing slave code. However, they also told other Republicans that it might reject slavery because there were very few slaves, and if not, it could easily be overtaken by Northern immigrants as Kansas had been. Extremists on both sides rejected this two-faced argument; unwilling to accept even the possibility of the other side gaining the state, they demanded guarantees. In fact, the backlash from Republican hardliners caused Adams, the sponsor of the proposal, to eventually turn against it.<sup>66</sup> Douglas Democrats and border-state Unionists voiced limited support for the idea, although most preferred the proposal to extend the 1820 Missouri Compromise line.

In February, after seven states had seceded, many Republican opponents added the arguments that the Crittenden Compromise was too late to save the Union, and that a sovereign



**Figure 10.** House vote to table H.R. 1008 (New Mexico statehood), March 2, 1861.

	Voters	NO	percent	YES	percent
<b>Republican</b>	105	27	26%	78	74%
<b>So Dem</b>	31	13	42%	18	58%
<b>No Dem</b>	29	20	69%	9	31%
<b>Unionist</b>	22	11	50%	11	50%

**Table 7.** House vote to table H.R. 1008 (New Mexico statehood), May 2, 1861.

New Mexico might secede, joining the Confederacy or even rejoining Mexico. Even the border-state moderates who had created the compromise proposals began to despair at their chances of success. James Wilson of Indiana summed up the situation very succinctly:

I have now considered all the plans of adjustment before Congress. No one of them can bring permanent and lasting peace to the country. I admit the Union is in peril. But . . . I do not believe that there is any possibility that this Congress can do anything to effect a settlement—we differ too widely and radically.<sup>67</sup>

When the New Mexico bill (H.R. 1008) was brought up for a vote on the penultimate day of the Congress on May 2, 1861, it was quickly tabled, even as Otero begged for the floor, and William Hooper, the Utah delegate, attempted to add an amendment granting statehood to Deseret.<sup>68</sup> New Mexico would have to wait another fifty years for statehood. As shown in Table 7 and Figure 10, the vote to table H.R. 1008 clearly did not follow the common voting blocs, with all four factions dividing. For once, it appears that each congressman weighed the political and

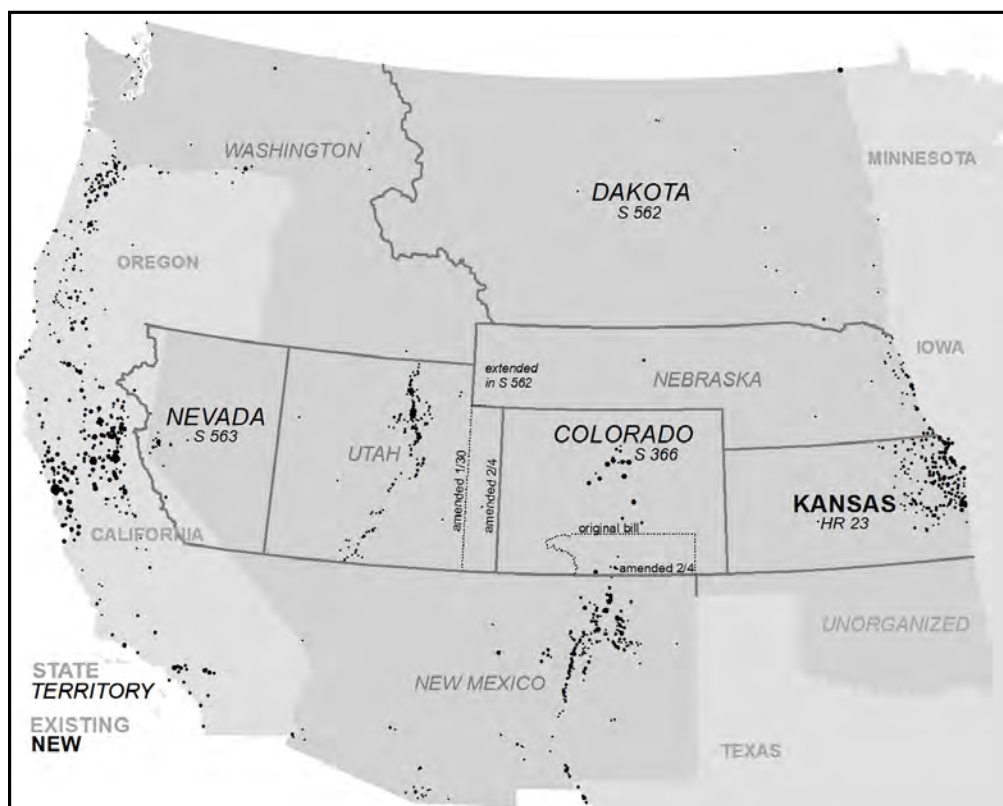
regional factors involved, in the context of other compromise proposals, and voted his conscience rather than toeing the party line. Remnants of moderate, multi-partisan support for New Mexico on both sides of the slave-free border were overwhelmed by the extremists at both ends: Republicans who refused to make any concession to slavery when they were so close to dominating the entire government, and Southerners who recognized New Mexico as an immaterial gain.

### *Final acts*

During the time the Senate was debating Kansas, the Arizona bill introduced the previous spring (S. 365) also resurfaced in December 1860. After two days of debate on whether slavery would be allowed, it was “postponed until tomorrow,” and never came up again.<sup>69</sup>

On January 30, 1861, S. 366 returned to the floor of the Senate under the name of “Jefferson.”<sup>70</sup> Green immediately offered a replacement bill, with no mention of slavery status whatsoever, the name “Idaho” and a new boundary that trimmed the northern border but took much more of Utah (Figure 11), which was accepted. There was very little debate on the bill, since by this time enough Southern Senators had left due to their states seceding, that passage was guaranteed. Also, most lawmakers who did speak recognized the regional factors—especially that it was a significant cluster of population far removed from capitals in Salt Lake City and Topeka—and they saw little point in a drawn-out debate.

On February 4, S. 366 was again amended, changing the boundary to its current location and the name to “Colorado.” Green explained that the western boundary change was necessitated by new information on the extent of Mormon settlements; in his words, “they had better all remain together.” He also said that the southern boundary was being changed against his wishes and those of Otero, the delegate from New Mexico, as a compromise to garner Republican support for a territory without a ban on slavery.<sup>71</sup> Although there were some objections to moving New



**Figure 11.** States and territories of the Western United States after passage of four acts in early 1861, including the final adjustments of Colorado Territory.

Mexicans who did not want to change governance, and transferring land out of a slave territory, the bill passed the Senate by a party line vote, taking advantage of the new Republican majority. When S. 366 was reported in the House on February 18, Otero attempted to amend the New Mexico border to its original location, with vocal support from southern Democrats, but Grow quashed debate, incorrectly claiming that nobody lived in the transferred portion of New Mexico. The bill was passed by another party-line vote (Table 8), and the President signed it on February 28, 1861.<sup>72</sup>

Once the Colorado model was set, matching bills for the other territories, minus an Arizona bill that would have incurred a slavery debate, were rushed through Congress, as shown in Figure 11. Bills were introduced in the Senate on February 14, for a Dakota (S. 562) that took the northern plains and mountains from Nebraska (which retained southern Wyoming, and even annexed a portion of northeastern Utah in a rider on S. 562), and a Nevada (S. 563) that was smaller than earlier House proposals but adding the eastern slope of the Sierra Nevada, subsequent to approval by California (which never happened before Nevada relinquished the claim upon statehood in 1864). The bills passed the Senate with no debate, no amendments, and voice votes on February 25 and 26, rushed through the House on March 1 (with a party-line vote, as shown in Table 9), and signed by the President March 2, 1861.<sup>73</sup>

It was a great irony that after months of refusal to compromise, and after the threat to secede without compromise had already been realized, the Republicans single-handedly created three territories without banning slavery. Moreover, they passed a constitutional amendment protecting slavery in the states, and decided not to repeal New Mexico's slave code. It is also a mystery why the Northern Democrats and southern Unionists, after begging for compromise on the territorial issue, almost unanimously voted against these bills. The lack of debate does not help, nor the fact that even the moderate Republicans did not promote the legislation as a compromise.<sup>74</sup> One possible reason is that other compromise legislation was then pending, as described above, including the extension of the Missouri Compromise line. Perhaps these acts were silent on slavery because the Republicans thought the rest of the compromise would take care of that, even though the possibility of passage was slim by late February. Southerners (including Unionists) likely voted against the bills because they created three more potential states that, even without an explicit slavery ban, were almost guaranteed to become free states. Yet another

	Voters	NO	percent	YES	percent
<b>Republican</b>	88	2	2%	86	98%
<b>So Dem</b>	20	20	100%	0	0%
<b>No Dem</b>	16	12	75%	4	25%
<b>Unionist</b>	11	11	100%	0	0%

**Table 8.** House vote on S. 366 (Colorado Territory), Feb. 18, 1861.

	Voters	NO	percent	YES	percent
<b>Republican</b>	81	0	0%	81	100%
<b>So Dem</b>	22	22	100%	0	0%
<b>No Dem</b>	21	13	62%	8	38%
<b>Unionist</b>	18	17	94%	1	6%

**Table 9.** House vote on S. 563 (Nevada Territory), Feb. 26, 1861.



possibility is that the Republican majority gave the Southern Moderates some political cover, so they could publicly take a pro-slavery stand while knowing that the bills would pass.

## Conclusions

By the end of the 36<sup>th</sup> Congress in March 1861, the map of the West had changed significantly (compare Figure 11 to Figure 3), but not as much as it could have. Kansas was made a state with smaller boundaries than it previously had, and three new territories were created. Utah and Nebraska were reduced considerably, but neither had achieved the statehood they sought. California and New Mexico were left unchanged, despite their support for ceding territory. By analyzing the citizen requests, the debates, the votes, and the boundaries of failed and enacted bills, several observations can be made about the underlying processes.

A variety of regional factors played a role in the territorial changes. Bills were introduced (three times in some cases) subsequent to legitimate petitions from the new and established settlement regions asserting their rights of self-rule and the challenges of governance from distant capitals,<sup>75</sup> and in most cases, the outcome was in line with their regional-factor justification. Kansas had the requisite population to be admitted as a state, while Nebraska and Utah did not. Nevada and Colorado were clearly justified by their population and remoteness. The population of Dakota was very small but it was without any organized government at all. Utah was able to retain its status as a territory, despite attempts to destroy it. Of course, citizen requests were not entirely based on regional factors. Political desires for identity, clout, and economic potential<sup>76</sup> were also evident in the requests and their claimed boundaries. The debates in Congress over these proposals tended to focus on regional factors (such as settlement patterns and physical features) more than political factors, showing that congressmen were aware of the geographic situation in the West, even if they did not have complete information.

However, the evidence also shows that the final voting was most strongly influenced by slavery and the political goals it engendered. Most Republicans said that Kansas, Colorado, Nevada, and Dakota were obvious and immediate needs (using regional-factors rhetoric), but the equally justified proposals for changes to New Mexico, Arizona, and Southern California were ignored or rejected. They wanted to create as many northern territories as possible and to promote existing northern territories to states to build their power base, but keep southern New Mexico as a single territory to reduce southern power.<sup>77</sup> The Southern Democrats had the exact opposite view: Arizona and New Mexico were the most immediate needs. Even the proposals of the two moderate groups had more to do with solving the slavery problem than what was actually happening in the West. For example, extending the 36°30' N Missouri Compromise line had a strong political rationale, but contradicted regional factors because it would have divided the most densely populated part of New Mexico in half.

Almost every significant vote divided along either slavery or party lines, and the internal solidarity of the four voting blocs (Republicans, Southern Democrats, Northern Democrats, Southern Unionists) proved very strong. Although the Unionists generally sided with the Southern Democrats on these issues, the Northern Democrats were usually the group that decided the outcome, at least in the first session. In the second session, the successful bills were only enacted once the southern secessions had given the Republicans power to legislate at will.

In summary, most members seem to have followed a clear order of priorities from our model in their voting:

1. Take the action that will increase the long-term strength of your political interests (political factor)
2. Take the action that is desired by the residents, unless they are Mormons or Hispanic (regional factor).

In contrast to the voting on the creation of the political units themselves, regional factors appear to have been much stronger in the design of the boundaries. This is especially the case when one considers Congress' knowledge of western geography, as evidenced by contemporary maps.<sup>78</sup> The information on these maps about physical features and human settlement was very scarce, imprecise, and incorrect, especially at greater distances from the established settlement cores. The boundaries designed by Congress generally attempted to evenly divide the major settlement regions. Although the straight boundary lines may seem irrational today, in most cases, "better" boundary locations (e.g., mountains, rivers) were unknown, and the frontier regions between the cores were not considered important or contested enough to warrant more careful boundaries.

The major exceptions to this pattern were in cases in which western governments with greater political clout such as Kansas and Nebraska desired to gain high value land or to get rid of distant, unmanageable land by giving it to regions with less influence. For example, Nebraska ceded most of its distant territory to Dakota, except for the potentially lucrative railroad corridor, of which it even annexed some territory from Utah. Only the New Mexico-Colorado border appears to be an overt political boundary (a compromise for votes, as stated above).

Generally, boundary decisions tended to follow the following order of priorities from our model:

1. Give the territories you like what they want (political and regional)
2. Keep existing boundaries whenever possible (regional)
3. Minimize travel distance to the state/territory capital (regional)
4. Straight boundaries that are simple to describe are best, especially in unimportant lands (regional)
5. Use barrier features such as rivers and mountains if they are well known and consistent with other factors (regional)

In general, regional boundaries appeared when political issues did not come into play, which in this case was most of the time. This pattern was quite different from the Compromise of 1850, in which political factors played a much larger role in the drawing of the boundaries, especially the line between Utah and New Mexico.

In all of these cases of territorial change, our four basic principles apply in varying degrees. For example, the "identity" associated with the Mormons in Utah and the Hispanic population of New Mexico was certainly an important issue. Additionally, "resource" and "service area" arguments were important in the discussions related to Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakotas. And finally, the perceived "political capital" associated with the creation of political units that might lean one way or the other in terms of the slavery questions loomed large during our study period.

In conclusion, the bills, debates, and votes of the 36<sup>th</sup> Congress exhibit a fairly clear pattern of legislators considering both regional and political factors. These factors could also explain the process of governmental subdivision in many different historical and current situations, and at different scales, although perhaps in different orders of priority. As our model is further refined, it would be valuable to test its application to other eras in U.S. History, and in other countries, especially comparing various forms of federal and unitary governments. We would also like to test how well the model applies to other scales, such as cities, counties, and congressional redistricting, which appear to be created based on similar factors.<sup>79</sup>

Regardless of its general applicability, our analysis significantly aids in the understanding of the territorial actions of 1859-1861. As it created territories and states, and declined other proposals, the 36<sup>th</sup> Congress was not just about slavery, nor was it purely concerned with the geography and wishes of the western territories; its decisions exhibited a complex interaction of

geographical and political considerations. It was an interplay of general principles and unique events that has had a lasting effect on the geography of the western United States.

## NOTES

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- 9 Paddison, *The Fragmented State*, 19, 253; Rosemarie Zagarri, *The Politics of Size: Representation in the United States, 1776-1850* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), 61-81.
- 10 Smith, "Geographical Space," 1, 11- 12; Paddison, *The Fragmented State*, 19, 123, 253; Gottman, *Significance of Territory*, 54; Zagarri, *The Politics of Size*, 37, 61-81, 122.
- 11 Sack, *Human Territoriality*, 157; Paddison, *The Fragmented State*, 14, 147; Gottmann, *Significance of Territory*, 101.
- 12 Donald W. Meinig, "American Wests: Preface to a Geographical Introduction," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 62 (1972): 159-184; Donald W. Meinig, *The Shaping of America: A Geographical Perspective on 500 Years of History, Volume 3: Transcontinental America, 1850-1915* (New Haven: Yale Univ Press, 1998). The model is further developed and contextualized in previous reference. Paddison, *The Fragmented State*, is a broader comparative work of subnational government.
- 13 Meinig, *The Shaping of America*, 432-479.
- 14 For examples, refer to Fred M. Shelley, J. C. Archer, F. M. Davidson, S. D. Brunn, *Political Geography of the United States*, (New York: Guilford Press, 1996); Glen M. Leonard, "Southwestern Boundaries and the Principles of Statemaking," *Western Historical Quarterly* 8 (1977): 39-53..
- 15 For examples, see B. Sacks, *Be It Enacted: The Creation of the Territory of Arizona* (Phoenix: Arizona Historical Foundation, 1964); Howard R. Lamar, *Dakota Territory: 1861-1889* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1956).
- 16 Mark J. Stegmaier, "An Imaginary Negro in an Impossible Place? The Issue of New Mexico Statehood in the Secession Crisis, 1860-1861," *New Mexico Historical Review* 84, no. 2: 263-290.

- 17 Michael A. Morrison, *Slavery and the American West: The Eclipse of Manifest Destiny and the Coming of the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); David M. Potter (completed and edited by Don E. Fehrenbacher) *The Impending Crisis: 1848-1861* (Harper & Row, 1976); Joel H. Silbey, *The Partisan Imperative: The Dynamics of American Politics Before the Civil War* (Oxford University Press, 1985).
- 18 William J. Cooper, *We Have the War Upon Us* (New York: Knopf, 2012), 207-208; Daniel W. Crofts, *Reluctant Confederates: Upper South Unionists in the Secession Crisis* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 255.
- 19 Wayne L. Wahlquist, "Population Growth in the Mormon Core Area: 1847-90," in *The Mormon Role in the Settlement of the West*, ed. Richard H. Jackson (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1978), 107-134.
- 20 United States House of Representatives, *Miscellaneous Documents*, 36<sup>th</sup> Congress (hereafter *H. MiscDoc.*), 1<sup>st</sup> Session #6.
- 21 Sacks, *Territory of Arizona*, 39; Kent D. Richards, *Growth and Development of Government in the Far West: The Oregon Provisional Government, Jefferson Territory, Provisional and Territorial Nevada* (PhD Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1976)
- 22 Brad Tennant, "Becoming Dakota Territory: The 1861 Organic Act and the Struggle for Territorial Status," *South Dakota History* 43, no. 2 (Summer 2013): 118-146.
- 23 Richards, *Growth and Development*, 163, 232; Sacks, *Territory of Arizona*, 40; Lamar, *Dakota Territory*, 41. A few, such as California, Oregon, and Utah (as the "State of Deseret"), had been fully functioning; however, Nevada, Arizona, Dakota, and "Jefferson" (Colorado), were more symbolic than substantial, with assemblies that existed only long enough to draft a constitution, elect a spokesman "governor" and send a lobbyist "delegate" to Washington with a memorial requesting recognition.
- 24 Kevin T. Barksdale, *The Lost State of Franklin: America's First Secession* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2008).
- 25 Myron Angel, *History of Nevada* (Thompson & West, 1881), 71; *H. MiscDoc.* 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 10; Sacks, *Territory of Arizona*, 40 and Stegmaier, "New Mexico Statehood," 265. First reference for Nevada. Second reference for Jefferson. Third reference for Arizona.
- 26 *S. MiscDoc.* 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 2; *CG*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 494.
- 27 Kirk H. Porter, *National Party Platforms* (1924), 48.
- 28 Stegmaier, "New Mexico Statehood," 274.
- 29 Daniel J. Elazar, *Building Toward Civil War: Generational Rhythms in American Politics* (Madison Books, 1992), 18.
- 30 Matthew Glassman, "Beyond the Balance Rule," in *Congress and the Crisis of the 1850s*, eds. Paul Finkelman and Donald R. Kennon, (Athens, OH: United States Capitol Historical Society), 84.
- 31 Porter, *National Party Platforms*, 48.
- 32 Morrison, *Slavery and the American West*, 195.
- 33 Potter, *The Impending Crisis*, 416; Crofts, *Reluctant Confederates*, 123-124. "Southern Opposition" was never an official name, nor was it an organized party. The congressional record lists these congressmen as the American Party, which was the official name of the 1850s nativist party that was commonly known as the Know-Nothing movement. However, by 1859, the American Party was basically defunct, and most of these congressmen had only loosely ever been tied to it. They generally still referred to themselves as Whigs, or as "the opposition" to the Democratic Party that dominated most of the South. During the 1860 Election and the subsequent Secession Crisis, the opposition in the Upper South became more unified in their defense against the secession of slave states, thus becoming known as Unionists. In fact, many border states organized a Union Party during the winter of 1861. In



the Deep South, former whigs such as Alexander Stephens reluctantly agreed to secession, and thus were often called "cooperationists."

- 34 Thomas B. Alexander, *Sectional Stress and Party Strength: A Study of Roll-Call Voting Patterns in the United States House of Representatives, 1836-1860* (Vanderbilt University Press, 1967), 104.
- 35 United States Congress, *Congressional Globe*, 36<sup>th</sup> Congress (Washington, D.C., John C. Rives, 1861), <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ankaw/lwgcg.html> (hereafter CG); U.S. House of Representatives, *House Journal*, 36<sup>th</sup> Congress, <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwhj.html> (hereafter HJ); U.S. Senate, *Senate Journal*, 36<sup>th</sup> Congress, <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwsj.html> (hereafter SJ); U.S. Congress, *Bills and Resolutions of the House and Senate*, 36<sup>th</sup> Congress, <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwhbsb.html> (cited as H.R. or S.).
- 36 HJ 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 210; SJ, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 27.
- 37 SJ 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 66, 97; CG 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 494, 648. The Dakota resolution was tabled before it was referred to committee. The California memorial was referred to the Judiciary Committee, probably due to constitutional questions of the re-federalization of state land.
- 38 HJ, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 232, 294, 326, 691; SJ, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 177; CG, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 756, 909. The Senate Kansas Bill (S. 194) was fiercely debated upon introduction, but never referred to committee.
- 39 CG, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 648, 816; HJ, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 320, 571.
- 40 In fact, since most bills were not printed prior to committee consideration, the text of these bills (including their boundaries) is unknown.
- 41 United States House of Representatives, *Minutes, House Committee on Territories*, 35<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session (Feb 23, 1860) - 43<sup>rd</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session (Dec 17, 1873) (Hereafter HCT Minutes), U.S. National Archives, 8E3/15/20/2. Presumably, minutes, debate, and testimony were recorded, but only one incomplete minute book from the Committee on Territories could be found via reference.
- 42 CG, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 2616.
- 43 Stephen A. Douglas, *Remarks of the Hon. Stephen A. Douglas on Kansas, Utah, and the Dred Scott Decision, Delivered at Springfield, Illinois, June 12<sup>th</sup> 1857* (Chicago: Daily Times).
- 44 CG, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 1411, 1495, 2057; HJ, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 1165. Thayer's proposals were unique in that they did not propose territories, merely land districts to sell federal lands to settlers. Thayer had been instrumental in settling Kansas with free-state emigrants, and preferred that settlers govern themselves through *ad hoc* provisional governments rather than federal territories. However, he had very little support for this theory in Congress, and almost every one of his proposals was refused from being officially introduced on the floor (let alone brought to a vote). It seems likely that Thayer's unorthodox views on this and other issues were among the reasons he lost his seat in the 1860 election.
- 45 CG, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 1515.
- 46 HJ, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 661. H.R. 7 later died in the Senate committee, but a virtually identical bill from Morrill was enacted by the 37<sup>th</sup> Congress.
- 47 CG, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 1662.
- 48 CG, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 1642.
- 49 Glassman, "Beyond the Balance Rule," 96.
- 50 The East-West dividing line would have passed through the middle of the future Phoenix.
- 51 HCT Minutes, 30 April 1860.
- 52 CG, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 2047.
- 53 CG, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 2066-2077.
- 54 Cooper, *We Have the War Upon Us*, 105.
- 55 Crofts, *Reluctant Confederates*, 195.

- 56 *HJ*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, 122; *H. MiscDoc.* 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, #10.
- 57 *CG*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, 189.
- 58 *CG*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 2616.
- 59 *CG*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 2618.
- 60 *SJ*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, 116, 121.
- 61 United States Congress, *Statutes at Large of the 36<sup>th</sup> Congress of the United States of America* (1861), 288; 17, <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwsl.html> (hereafter *U.S. Stat.*).
- 62 United States Senate, *Committee Reports*, 36<sup>th</sup> Congress (1861) (hereafter *S. Rep.*), 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, #288, 17.
- 63 *CG*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, 401.
- 64 United States House of Representatives, *Committee Reports*, 36<sup>th</sup> Congress (1861) (hereafter *H. Rep.*), 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, #31; *CG*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, 378.
- 65 Stegmaier, "New Mexico Statehood," 274.
- 66 Cooper, *We Have the War Upon Us*, 156.
- 67 *CG*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, Appendix, 133.
- 68 *CG*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, 1327.
- 69 *SJ*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, 68.
- 70 *CG*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, 639.
- 71 *CG*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, 728, 765; Lamar, *Dakota Territory*, 61.
- 72 *CG*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, p. 1003; *U.S. Stat.*, 59; 172.
- 73 *U.S. Stat.*, 83; 209; and 86; 239.
- 74 Cooper, *We Have the War Upon Us*, 105; Crofts, *Reluctant Confederates*, 255. Previous studies have also noted the inexplicable nature of this result, including references.
- 75 Sack, *Human Territoriality*, 86-90, 151, 157; Smith, "Geographical Space," 12; Zagarri, *Politics of Size*, 26, 37.
- 76 Paddison, *Fragmented State*, 12; Agnew, "Regions of the Mind"; Gottmann, *Significance of Territory*, 105.
- 77 Paddison, *Fragmented State*, 19, 253; Zagarri, *Politics of Size*, 61-81.
- 78 Gouverneur K. Warren, *Map of the Territory of the United States from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean* (Washington, D.C.: Army Topographical Engineers, 1858). Although it is not known what maps were used in the drafting of bills, a likely candidate is this reference. It was produced for Congress, matches the geography as described in the debates, and the Library of Congress has a copy with the enacted 1861 boundaries hand-drawn (G4050 1858. W34, digital copy at <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4050.ct001205>).
- 79 Fr coKarinne Rancie, Samuel M. Otterstrom, Jeffrey M. Sanders, and Fredric J. Donaldson, "Environmental and Social Influences on Historical County Creation in the United States," in *Planning and Socioeconomic Applications, Geotechnologies and the Environment* 1, eds. J. D. Gatrell and R. R. Jensen, (Berlin: Springer), 183-204. For counties, see reference.

# BOOK REVIEWS

**Edited by Soren Larsen**

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*GO: On the Geographies of Gunnar Olsson.* CHRISTIAN ABRAHAMSSON & MARTIN GREN, editors. Surrey / Burlington: Ashgate, 2012. Pp. xiii+398, reprints, diagrams, illustrations, index. \$144.95 hardback. ISBN 978-1-4094-1237-3.

This book masterfully traces Gunnar Olsson's journey as a major geographical thinker from his early years as a "space cadet" of the quantitative revolution to his ontological conversion and contemporary explorations of the semiotic landscape and the abyss of Western cartographic reason. Lovingly cultivated by Christian Abrahamsson and Martin Gren, this homage places the esteemed Swedish geographer mapping "the taboo-ridden territory of the taken-for-granted" and entering "lands not yet discovered," somewhere in between the certainties of modernity and the ambiguity of postmodernity (p. 22). As a doctoral candidate, Olsson was influenced by Esse Lövgren whom he described as a "brilliant man obsessed with the idea of translating the vagaries of human behavior into the precise language of mathematics" (p. 8). However as a practicing geographer, it soon became apparent to Olsson that mathematical models applied to social issues were problematic, particularly as identical spatial forms could be generated through drastically different processes. To Olsson this revealed more about spatial distribution models themselves and less about the intricacies of human behavior and interaction. As a citizen of a modern Nordic welfare state buttressed by the ideology that a better and just society was based on the exact scientific knowledge, he soon began to believe that planning based on spatial interaction models not only created ethical and political dilemmas but was also scientifically questionable as well. Olsson concluded that social engineering approaches were "far more geared towards the growth and maintenance of its own bureaucracy than towards the interest of those sick and disadvantaged which it is supposed to serve" (p. 11) and tended in his view, to conserve rather than diminish existing inequalities—an ironic outcome contrary to the political intentions of the social democratic state. In *Servitude and Inequality in Spatial Planning*, penned for the journal *Antipode* in 1974, Olsson writes:

In retrospect, it appears that the majority of spatial analysts—among whom I certainly include myself—have confined ourselves so thoroughly within our inherited concepts, within our categorical frameworks, within our particular mathematical language, and within our artifacts that we thereby have helped perpetuate the functional inequalities of the past (p. 106).

This recognition presaged and served as a catalyst for Olsson's ontological transformation in which he viewed human "power" as inseparable from language. Influenced by Samuel Beckett's

observation that James Joyce's writing was "not *about* something, but *is* that something itself" (Samuel Beckett, quoted in *GO*, p. 21), Olsson invoked Joyce's "map of the soul's grupography" to guide his conceptual expeditions in the 1970s, '80s and '90s through intangible fields of "invisible geographies" to establish a semiotically influenced cartography of thought (p. 21). Accordingly, Abrahamsson and Gren's text presents Olsson's papers in their original typefaces, font sizes and journal template styles. Their text also charts via companion pieces and pen profiles by Olsson's colleagues and former students of his mental and physical travels from Uppsala to the University of Michigan, and back to Sweden in 1977 where he was appointed chair of economic geography and planning at the Nordic Institute in Urban and Regional Planning in Stockholm. It can be seen that his teaching strongly informed his research perspectives. Olsson's trans-disciplinary and trans-cultural pedagogical experiences informed his vision of lecturing in "neither a scientific laboratory nor a government-sponsored Center for Brainwashing [but] rather an open environment in which the grafting proves to be so successful that everyone can develop one's own personality" (p. 20). In "Chiasm of thought-and-action" (*Environment and Planning D*, volume 11, 1993), Olsson states "I prefer the term 'imagination' to that of 'theory'" and declares "social realism is bad art for the same reasons social engineering is bad ethics, less because knowledge is power, more because power is knowledge" (quoted in Abrahamsson and Gren, p. 190).

He then goes on describes the evolution of his ontological transformations, and the questions provoked, in terms of his own work:

My own imagination has emerged gradually, in stages without breaks. This there are clear affinities between my current concerns and the etchings of *Birds in Egg/Egg in Birds* [1980], the watercolors of *Antipasti* [1990], and the oils of *Lines of Power/Limits of Language* [1991]. How do I know the difference between you and me and how do we share our beliefs in the same? To which extent is it I who speak through language and language speaks through me? How are we made so obedient and so predictable?<sup>1</sup>

Such musings and observations contain seeds which would bloom fully in 2007's *Abysmal: A Critique of Cartographic Reason*. In 1994 Olsson noted "any artist worthy of the name tries to render not the visible but the non-visible, not what catches the eye but what hides in the taken-for-granted" (p. 21). It can be argues that Joyce successfully did so in *Ulysses* (1922). In this instance, *Abysmal* is both Joycean and Biblical in its scale and scope, with Olsson apocalyptically stating, "Plato's Sun is setting," and declaring in manifesto:

The current truth is in fact that the fix-points, scales and mappa of cartographic reason have lost much of the power they once had. Immersed in a world which is neither solid nor stable we are beginning to suspect that the excluded of the excluded middle might have escaped from the Renaissance lines of modernism and taken refuge in the Baroque folds of postmodernism.<sup>2</sup>

Olsson advises to approach *Abysmal* "as a minimalist guide to the landscape of western culture" (p. ix), and draws upon theology, mythology, cartography, aesthetics, philosophy, geometry and semiotics to exegetically braid strands of thought rooted in seminal pieces of literature, art and scripture. Giving voices to Biblical, classical Greek, enlightenment and modern philosophers, modernist artists, linguists and novelists among others, Olsson's critique gives lie to the emperor's new clothes of modern cartographically parsed reason. Abrahamsson and Gren, who open their text with a dialogical "Preamble," have done a great and invaluable service for geographical



scholarship. Acting as conductors they skillfully orchestrate pieces by Reginald G. Golledge, Michael Dear, Michael J. Watts, David Jansson, Jette Hansen-Möller, Chris Philo, Gunnael Jansson, Alessandra Bonazzi, Ole Michael Jensen, Marcus Doel, and Franco Farinelli into a coherent overarching multi-perspectival intellectual symphonia, which interspersed with critical tones and colors from Olsson's own *oeuvre* over the past thirty years, provides an Arcades-like impression of one of the most innovative geographical thinkers at work on the planet today.

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## NOTES

1. Gunnar Olsson, *Abysmal: A Critique of Cartographic Reason* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 247. Gunnar Olsson's question: "How are we made so obedient and so predictable?" struck this reviewer as a perfect description of the human landscape of recent Association of American Geography meetings where conference attendees sit peering obediently into the predictably soft glow of their iPads, laptops, and cell phones—perhaps instigating digital ecosystems and networks, or more ominously braiding their synaptic structures into complacent electronic straightjackets. The reviewer is also guilty of this obedience and predictability.
2. Ibid.



*Life on a Rocky Farm: Rural Life near New York City in the Late Nineteenth Century*. LUCAS C. BARGER, transcribed and with an introduction by Peter A. Rogerson. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013. Pp. xxv+163, maps, appendices. \$19.95 paperback. ISBN 978-1-4384-4602-8.

*Life on a Rocky Farm* is a captivating first-hand account of agricultural life in nineteenth and early twentieth century Putnam County, NY. The account, written by Lucas Barger (1866-1939), demonstrates the impacts of industrialization on "traditional" agricultural life through a series of vignettes. A typewritten version of the manuscript was discovered at the Putnam Valley Historical Society by Peter Rogerson, a geographer and relative of Barger's. Rogerson's research also led him to the New York State Library where he discovered a copy of the original handwritten manuscript and a series of letters between Barger and his daughter. Both Barger and his daughter had intended to publish the manuscript but failed to do so before Barger passed away in 1939. The Barger family's efforts are here recognized by Rogerson, who has painstakingly transcribed and edited the manuscript. His preface describes the curious history of the manuscript's discovery and transcription, and his editor's introduction and notes throughout the book situate Barger's account historically using maps, US Census Non-Population Schedules and other documents.

Barger's vignettes provide a unique commentary on farm life, though they do not often name specific characters or family members. The manuscript is divided into several chapters such as "Incomes Directly from Nature" or "Life of the Rocky Farm Women," and subdivided into descriptions of aspects of farm life such as making apple cider, planting, making soap or candles, basketry, raising sheep, and even women smoking. Three appendices at the end of the book list words and their phonetic spelling as pronounced in the regional dialect, and then provide example conversations between named individuals (though it is unclear what their relationship is with Barger, if any).

Barger describes tasks vividly and colorfully in his own unique style, as if he were an older relative recalling fond memories. An air of nostalgic yearning is present in most of the

stories, and these are described in detail only to end with a wistful and disappointing statement of how that particular task, profession, or tool was replaced by industry or an invention. For example, Barger meticulously describes an old woman drying apples in her kitchen, but ends the story with "Several women got to doing this, and then, as usual, some inventor got wise as to what was needed, and produced an 'evaporator' that dried not only apples, but any old kinds of fruit, vegetables, or what have you! The old apple peeling machine was thrown up in the garret to rust out" (p. 35). It must be remembered by the reader that this is not a diary, but a conscious attempt by Barger not only to describe the past, but to make certain the reader understands the impact of industrialization on small, rural farming families and their daily tasks. He consistently references the advent of industry and invention, and how these socio-economic impacts forever changed life on rocky farms in Putnam County for the worse.

Barger's resistance to technology and change is not surprising given his history and geographic location. His perspective mirrors other first-hand accounts of nineteenth-century life in Putnam County as well as other areas in the Northeast. These accounts dovetail with the broader historical processes that permeate Barger's writings. For example, Field Horne's article "Life on a Rocky Farm 1862-1902" in *The Hudson Valley Regional Review* (1990, vol. 7 no.1) summarizes the diaries of Isaac Oakley, a farmer who lived near Lake Oscawana in Putnam County, NY during the nineteenth century. The article complements Barger's manuscript by situating Oakley's daily activities within broader regional socio-economic processes, such as the transport of butter or apples from Putnam County to New York City. Lynn Bonfield's article "The Work Journal of Albert Bickford, Mid-Nineteenth-Century Vermont Farmer, Cooper, and Carpenter" (*Vermont History* 72, Summer/Fall 2004) discusses Bickford's diaries and their relationship to broader regional patterns as well. *Jonnycakes and Cream: Oral Histories of Little Compton, R.I.*, edited by Carlton Brownell (1993) is a compilation of oral histories from a small agricultural town on the Rhode Island coast. Many stories are similar to Barger's (for example, farming flint corn); others describe region-specific tasks, such as collecting seaweed from the beach. Finally, Janet Nylander's *Our Own Snug Fireside: Images of the New England Home, 1760-1860* (1994) compiles other accounts from diaries that mirror Barger's resistance to change and industry.

The broader processes occurring during this time period include industrialization and the advent of the railroad, the migration of young adults from farmsteads to cities or the Midwest, and the eventual abandonment of farms and farming altogether as the countryside and coast became an escape for wealthier city-folk (see *The View from Vermont: Tourism and the Making of an American Rural Landscape* by Blake Harrison, 2006). Barger's microhistorical account describes the impact of all of these processes, most notably with an anecdote of a young man who left the family farm and returned twenty-five years later. He found the cornfields grown over, the house rotting away, and a lilac bush "fighting for its life" amidst a second-growth forest in the dooryard. In his characteristic style, Barger says of the man, "He said it made him feel sad" (p. 4). These processes are visible today to any resident of the Northeast who finds stone walls, building foundations, and other reminders of our cultural history in the forest. This landscape gave a specific identity to Barger and those who lived near him, just as it did (and continues to do) to others in the Northeast who described the stoniness of their own glacial till, and who built miles and miles of stone walls for which the region is now known. In addition to these widespread historical processes, Barger also offers unique insight on ecological events that occurred during the time period, such as the extinction of passenger pigeons, the American chestnut blight, the introduction of Paris Green to kill potato bugs, and the 1868 bee die-off. Barger not only encapsulates these events with his own commentary and perspective, but also describes the repercussions of these events for farmers.

This book is unique, and imparts Barger's own sense of nostalgia on the reader. I found myself wistful for my own childhood while reading his appeal for a time when there was no need

to use pesticides in apple orchards, pumpkins still tasted good, and baskets and barrels were still made by hand. Unfortunately the account does lack a good sense of the exact time period that many of these events might have transpired; and with the exception of scattered place-names throughout, and what is known about Barger living in Putnam County, NY, there are few hints as to whose farm or in what town these events occurred. Despite these small drawbacks, this book will interest a broad range of individuals from historical geography, historical archaeology, rural sociology, environmental science, and history itself. It would also be suitable for non-academic use as well, and would be of interest to any individual intrigued by the agricultural or rural history of the Northeast.

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*Greening the City: Urban Landscapes in the Twentieth Century.* DOROTHEE BRANTZ and SONJA DÜMPPELMANN, editors. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011. Pp. 246, site plans, photos, notes, index. \$45.00 cloth. ISBN 978-08-1393-114-2.

*Greening the City* is an edited collection of ten essays that examine the production of urban green spaces in Europe and America during the twentieth century. The collection is the result of a conference at the German Historical Institute in Washington, D.C. For editors Brantz and Dümpelemaan, the aim of this collection is to investigate how the use of urban “natural elements” evolved “as many industrial cities were transformed into postindustrial landscapes” (p. 7). To do this, the editors draw on a rich interdisciplinary body of knowledge from urban and environmental historians, architects and landscape architects, planners, anthropologists, and geographers.

This collection does not attempt to present a unifying definition of “nature.” Instead, it provides examples of the various approaches scholars have used to examine the historical relationship between the built and natural environments. The essays in this collection examine the wide-ranging ways in which cities have employed nature in the planning process. Throughout the four sections of this collection—“Constructing Green Spaces,” “Nature and Urban Identity,” “The Function of Nature in the City,” and “Ecology and the Urban Environment”—the “nature” the authors refer to includes individual plant species, open spaces (including parks, sporting grounds, forests, and nature preserves), and “countercultural ecotopias” found in the urban public realm (p. 8).

The two essays in Part 1 explore the influence of politics, Western European planning schemes, and modernization on the planning of green spaces and park systems in Sofia, Bulgaria and Mexico City. Sonia Hirt compares the ideological visions behind the use of green space in the master plans of pre-Communist, Communist, and post-Communist Sofia. Alfonso Valenzuela Aguilera examines the ways in which planning regimes in Mexico City used green spaces to improve public health and promote environmental awareness.

In one of the strongest sections, the three essays in Part 2 highlight the ways in which nature was used to forge both urban and regional identities in Barcelona, Berlin, and Los Angeles. Gary McDonough analyzes the plans and designs for the 1992 Summer Olympics and the 2004 Universal Forum of Cultures, to explore the social construction of nature and identity in Barcelona. He argues that the city used its unique physical geography and cultural landscape—its “Mediterraneanness”—as the foundation upon which to shape the city’s (and Catalan) identity and sense of place (p. 67). Stefanie Hennecke examines the ideologies behind the 1907 design of Berlin’s Schiller Park to show that park was a conservative reaction to modernization where

"modern cities were not reconcilable with nature" (p. 75). She notes that the park's designer called for the strict use of native German plant species since they embodied the noblest dimensions of the German character. Shifting from Europe to the United States, Lawrence Culver examines the increasing privatization of Los Angeles' public spaces throughout the twentieth century. Culver highlights the ways in which city boosters marketed the city's suburbs as places of recreation and leisure for white middle-class Angelenos, which "prioritized a private conceptualization of nature and recreation over a public one" (p. 109).

While the intention of Part 3 is to focus on the function of nature in the city, the essays in this section lack coherence. The weakness of this section comes from its inability to define the "function" of nature. The first essay examines the development of green spaces for sport in London and Helsinki. The authors try to assess the impact of these highly mechanized and modern landscapes on ecological function and biodiversity. Unfortunately, other than making broad claims about chemical fertilizers and monocultures in golf courses, it does not show specific ways that these spaces have altered the functioning of ecosystems. Highlighting the lack of coherence in this section, the second essay uses the notion of the "function" of nature to show that ways in which nature functioned as a "civic landscape" around which European cities could promote recentralization of the city and promote community life (p. 134).

The essays in Part 4, another strong section, explore the ecological dimensions of the city. Zachary Fakk examines the disagreements and legal disputes over what constitutes a "weed" in St. Louis, Buffalo, and Chicago to note that the creation of a tidy and orderly popular ecology, especially the "animosity" toward weeds and other unregulated plants, led cities to create a variety of nuisance laws that required the eradication of weeds (p. 175). Jeffrey Sanders examines the ways in which the cohousing, food co-ops, recycling programs, and community gardens in 1970s Seattle attempted to transform the city into an "ecotopia" (p. 183). These initiatives provided the basis for the "Jane Jacobs-meets-Rachel Carson vision" for urban growth (p. 184). Shifting to Germany, Jens Lachmund shows how the erection of the Berlin Wall separated naturalists and biologists in West Berlin from their previous fieldwork sites, and therefore, they turned their attention to the flora and fauna found within the isolated green spaces in the shadow of the wall.

Overall, despite lacking a broad theoretical focus from one section to the next, the essays in this collection are solid. They are well-written, short, and consumable in one sitting. Geographers seeking a theoretical argument along with a good narrative will enjoy many of these essays. However, conspicuously absent is a conclusion to this collection, which ends abruptly after the last essay. A short discussion of the findings presented in the essays, as well as the connections to the dilemmas facing the neoliberal cities of the twenty-first-century, would have been a welcome addition, and might have provided some coherence to the overall collection.

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*Bloomberg's New York: Class and Governance in the Luxury City.* JULIAN BRASH. Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2011. Pp. xii+344, maps, b&w photos, notes, index. \$24.95 paper. ISBN 978-0-8203-3681-7.

Brash dissects the events leading up to and the first nine years of the Bloomberg administration, which started January 1, 2002 and ended on December 31, 2013. His thesis is that the Bloomberg Way, as he calls it, was a unique form of neoliberalization of urban governance rooted in the recent experiences and conditions of New York City (hereafter referred to as the



City). The Bloomberg Way relied on postindustrial elites, whom Brash identifies as members of the Transnational Capitalist Class and of the Professional-Managerial Class. The ascendance of the Bloomberg Way depended on an urban imaginary of the City as a corporate entity that should be governed by a CEO mayor, who would lead in battle against urban-corporate competitors.

Brash, an anthropologist, relies on a methodology that combines neoMarxian class theory with intense ethnographic research in the City. He assumes class is determined in relation not only to production, but also is constituted by race, ethnicity, gender, space, and a complex lived reality in a place. For the ethnographic investigation Brash attended city council and planning commission meetings, met with neighborhood activists, conducted interviews (some off-the-record) with stakeholders, and perused a wide array of secondary sources.

The book is divided informally into three parts. In chapters 1 and 2 Brash, with an eye toward explaining Michael Bloomberg's rise to mayor, provides a history of the City's post World War II governance, especially after the fiscal crisis of the mid-1970s. In chapters 3 through 5, focusing on the early years of Bloomberg's first term as mayor, Brash discusses the assembling of the Bloomberg administration, the commodification of the City as a luxury product, and the Bloomberg Way. Chapters 6 through 9 detail the Bloomberg administration's efforts to gain support for and approval of the Hudson Yards plan, a project to develop Mid-town Manhattan's far west side. In the conclusion Brash ruminates on the broader implications of the Bloomberg Way to the City after 2005, its role in understanding City politics, and its significance to neoliberal governance in general.

The City's near bankruptcy of 1974 meant that bonds could no longer be sold to finance popular liberal redistribution policies. That crisis paved the way for neoliberalism with an emphasis on capital formation associated with entrepreneurialism. The rise of neoliberalism in the City, but its imperfect realization in City administrations through 2001, set the stage for Bloomberg to run for office as a "CEO mayor." He would be the anti-politician, the businessman with entrepreneurial and managerial experience who would govern the City effectively and independently of special interests.

Brash assesses Bloomberg's corporatization of City governance, treatment of businesses and citizens as clients and customers, and rebranding and marketing of the City as a luxury product. The reader is introduced to Daniel Doctoroff, the Deputy Mayor for economic development, Andrew Alper, the head of the Economic Development Corporation, and Amanda Burden, the chair of the City's planning commission. They were critical players in the Bloomberg Administration.

Rebranding the City involved creating an image of it as a peerless place to live and work that had great economic value for the right companies and ambitious, well-educated professionals. The City was to be transformed into its image via the Bloomberg Way, which involved trying to get everyone to support the new urban imaginary.

Brash highlights the Hudson Yards plan as the epitome of Bloomberg's urban and economic development strategy. Both the City Planning Department and NYC2012, a private organization crafting a bid for the 2012 Summer Olympic Games, planned for the redevelopment of the Hudson Yards. These rail yards were to be covered and then topped with an extension of the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, a stadium for the Jets and the Olympics, tall office buildings and hotels, and related facilities. This area had evaded redevelopment since the 1920s, but the Bloomberg administration was confident that it could use the Olympics bid to whip up enthusiasm for the execution of its plan. The stadium, however, was controversial among various constituencies that either deemed it unnecessary or better located elsewhere in the City.

The author captures the charade as the City invited public participation in the planning process, made some small concessions in building design and size, and then approved its plan

as representing “best planning practices.” To avoid having to fight for local legislative approval of the proposed stadium, the Bloomberg administration subjected the financing of the stadium side of the project (east of Eleventh Avenue) to approval by New York State’s Public Authorities Control Board (PACB). Various community planning associations offered counterplans that opposed locating a stadium in Hudson Yards and proved sufficiently persuasive that unanimous approval by the PACB, a prerequisite for stadium financing, never happened. Brash argues that the coup de grâce for the west-side stadium was the Bloomberg administration’s last ditch resort to urban patriotism; that is, the argument that any *real* New Yorker would never oppose the proposed stadium. That tack raised the ire of stadium opponents from all corners of the City.

Brash concludes with a discussion of how neoliberal urban governance has spread across the nation. Anyone in the academic world also can see this model of corporatization being applied relentlessly to colleges and universities by their governing bodies.

The book is a piece of solid scholarship, but is not without a few shortcomings. Cablevision owned the Madison Square Garden during the years covered in the book and did everything in its power to block the proposed stadium, a potential competitor for events, yet Brash only touches on Cablevision’s machinations. The one map, of the Hudson Yards plan, is insufficient in detail in that it shows none of the proposed multi-use redevelopment east of Eleventh Avenue, and other maps are needed to show the reader the locations of various places and buildings referred to that are beyond the Hudson Yards. Some of the black and white illustrations are too small to be entirely legible. Finally, I would have liked more fleshing out of the main actors in this story. Brash’s characterizations of Bloomberg and Doctoroff are very one-dimensional public personas – single-minded entrepreneurs.

This volume would make a good reader in a course on contemporary urban governance and is a valuable resource for any scholar interested in neoliberal urban governance, urban imaginaries, and the relationship of class formation and mobilization to neoliberal governance.

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*Approaching African History*. MICHAEL BRETT. Woodbridge, Suffolk: James Currey, 2013. Pp. xi+356, maps. \$90.00 hardcover. ISBN 978-1-84701-063-6.

*Approaching African History* is a formidable book. In his own words, Brett describes the aim of the book as providing “a narrative outline of African history over the past ten thousand years, as it has been established over the past sixty years, to describe on the one hand the growth of the concept of Africa, and on the other to show the ways in which the narrative itself has been constructed and its content understood” (p. x). In itself, any one of the three themes probably warrants a book on its own; combined, they constitute a monumental undertaking.

Brett divides the book into five parts. In Part I (The Problem of African History), he discusses the problem of defining African history and how to solve the problem of sourcing information and writing African history. In Part II (The Making of African Society), he uses archaeology and ethnography as tools to construct the African past, while in Part III (Africa in the World), he discusses African history as captured by the written word and the role of religion on the continent. In Part IV (The Unification of Africa), Europe enters the African narrative in a discussion of European colonization of the continent and the reactions among African societies to this invasion. In the last part (The Arrival of African History), Brett brings his account to the present in a discussion of the resurgence of Africa and gives his views on the contemporary history of Africa. The book is concluded by the last section, which mirrors the title of the book.

Brett has three aims in *Approaching African History*. First, he seeks to provide a narrative outline of the continent's history over ten thousand years. He highlights the problem of a sketchy (at best) written record, at least for most parts of the continent over the expansive time period he engages. His way of dealing with this problem is to take an interdisciplinary route. Borrowing from ethnographic analogy, archaeology, and oral tradition, he tries to peer into the distant past and then move from there to the more familiar ground of historical analysis of text. In so doing, Brett accomplishes two things: he fills in the gaps that undoubtedly would have existed had he relied solely on text, and he encourages historians confronted with the same limitations to emulate this interdisciplinary approach. In this way, Brett's work reflects the growing importance of interdisciplinary approaches to historical understanding. A recurring theme in this section is how changes in the Sahara desert influenced the course of African history. His discussion of the Sahara forms one of the book's most valuable contributions and underscores the complex relationships between the continent's geographical and historical developments.

The second aim of the book is to provide a historiography of Africa. To this end, Brett surveys sources from the earliest writers up to the contributions of contemporary authors, which, in turn, enables him to accomplish his third aim, an understanding of the development of Africa as an idea. Historical narratives, in short, have developed "Africa" as a coherent concept, a distinctive place that requires its own modes of explanation and understanding—a conceptualization that has grown in sophistication and importance over time, and continues to do so. In the final chapter of the book, Brett ties together his three themes into a coherent whole, as evident in the repetition of the book's title. He concludes the work by discussing the impact global warming and high population growth might have on Africa's future, indicating new avenues for research and debate in the unfolding history of this complex continent.

Does Brett accomplish the ambitious aims he sets out at the beginning of the book? My answer is a qualified "yes." Obviously, in taking on the entirety of African history in a single book, it is inevitable that important themes will be underrepresented or even completely absent. State formation, agriculture, and iron working are among the most notable of these. But these absences do not necessarily detract from the overall value of the book. Brett manages to give a reasonably comprehensive account of African history over the past ten thousand years, and his narrative is enriched substantially by the interdisciplinary approach. At the same time, his analysis of how Africa developed as a distinctive conceptual domain for historical study, and how this conceptualization has changed over time, adds valuable perspective to our understanding of African history as a whole. My only criticism is that the project is just a bit too ambitious. While Brett achieves the three aims he sets for himself, the discussion of each would have benefitted from expansion. I was left feeling that I wanted to know more about each theme long after I finished reading the book, and also that the narrative would have flowed better had each theme been given more space for elaboration. This, of course, would have added to the volume of the book, already long at 356 pages, and added to the problems of coherence. The ambition of Brett's undertaking is at once the strength and the weakness of the work.

Historical geographers should find the book a worthwhile read. The robust bibliography makes it possible to find a source on most themes related to African history, and as such adds to the value of the book. On a personal level, the book made me aware of some of the strands of African history I had little knowledge of, even though I lived on the continent my entire life. It also inspired me to read more about some of the issues addressed in *Approaching African History*. To me, a book that can do that has served its purpose.

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*Properties of Violence: Law and Land Grant Struggle in Northern New Mexico*. DAVID CORREIA. Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2013. Pp. xiii+220, maps, photographs, index. \$69.95 cloth. ISBN 978-0-8203-3284-0.

Last year, the rugged landscape of the Manzano Mountains near Chilili, New Mexico stood in for Afghanistan in the Hollywood film *Lone Survivor*. The production company paid \$30,000 to the Chilili Land Grant to film at the location. However, the land was held by deed as private property and the landowner was not aware of the filming. The president of the Chilili Land Grant argues that the entire land grant, which was awarded by the Mexican government in 1841, remains common property and all deeds for private property within the grant are invalid (KRQE News, Albuquerque, New Mexico). This case is notable only because of its ties with big-budget filmmaking. Contentious claims of land ownership in New Mexico's land grants are common and date to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo of 1848. The Treaty ended the Mexican-American War and ceded what is today New Mexico to the United States, including millions of acres of Spanish and Mexican land grants that were occupied by smallholders as common property. Between 1848 and when New Mexico gained statehood in 1912, land speculators and corrupt public officials had conspired to dispossess the grantees and their heirs of roughly 80 per cent of land grant areas. David Correia's *Properties of Violence* reveals for the first time how land grant heirs have actively contested this dispossession in a struggle that continues up to the present.

*Properties of Violence* presents a case study focused on the social and legal history of a land grant in northern New Mexico called Tierra Amarilla. The title derives from the violence that Correia argues is inherent in property law because enforcement of legal interpretations necessarily results in the forcible removal of people from their land. The simmering violence in Tierra Amarilla that Correia describes thereby challenges the conventional view among historians that the land grant heirs lost their land rights due to the incompatibility of common property and private property wherein the law is an apolitical fact. "Rather," Correia convincingly argues throughout, "law is a site of social struggle where claims over property are constructed and contested" (p. 7). Correia also advances the historiography of New Mexico land grant studies by adding intellectual depth to the one-dimensional view that common property was quietly lost in a series of discrete legal events. As Correia details, this "social struggle" has rather been ongoing since the nineteenth century within and without the court system.

The book's historical sweep begins in 1832 when the Mexican government awarded the Tierra Amarilla land grant to settlers. This expansion into what is today northern New Mexico—lands already occupied by Ute and Apache Indians—sparked Indian aggression that continued into the 1860s. In the twentieth century, violence broke out between land grant heirs and Anglo ranchers in Tierra Amarilla. A clandestine group known as La Mano Negra (The Black Hand) cut the fences of private ranchers and razed their homes and outbuildings. Some ranchers fled after receiving death threats. Later in the twentieth century, resistance to the enclosure of private property in Tierra Amarilla transitioned into legal challenges. In 1937, land grant heirs founded a broad-based membership organization called La Corporación de Abiquiú, Merced de Tierra Amarilla (the Abiquiú Corporation, Tierra Amarilla Land Grant). La Corporación collected and organized deeds, wills, letters, and other documents with which to assert the heirs' claim to communal property and rid the grant of private landowners. The chapter on the legal geographies of resistance is perhaps the book's most important. This is because other historians have largely ignored or overlooked the title and ejectment lawsuits filed by La Corporación between the 1930s and 1950s. As Correia explains, these lawsuits are critical for comprehending the sophisticated agency of local people in their ongoing struggle to defend their right to common property use. The courts ruled against La Corporación, however, by finding that common property use lies outside the law and so their ownership claims were dismissed.



Following their defeat in the courts, in the 1960s land grant heirs began to engage in more confrontational tactics such as sending eviction notices to Anglo ranchers and issuing their own fishing and hunting licenses on the grant. Correia contextualizes this continuing resistance to land dispossession not only as being about property rights but also about a struggle against racial inequality and economic injustice, which provoked state-sponsored violence. He recounts how the New Mexico State Police and federal law enforcement agencies targeted land grant heirs for surveillance, harassment, and arrest, and labeled some prominent activists as domestic terrorists.

After writing with impressive historical detail about the conflicts among social groups – Mexican settlers, Indian societies, Anglo ranchers, and law enforcement agencies – in the epilogue Correia extends his gaze into the present and finds irony. He notes how market forces are now shaping the (social) landscape of Tierra Amarilla. Sheep trails are being turned into hiking trails, and million-dollar vacation homes are popping up on the ridgelines. Correia recognizes that this new wave of property development “follows the logic of the market in which property is merely a technical problem of land use and an object wholly legible to the state” (p. 173). *Properties of Violence* thus adds to the scholarship on legibility that examines the ways states have engaged in top-down approaches to social ordering that disregard local knowledge and practices. In the case of Tierra Amarilla, common property use was illegible to the state in its myopic pursuit of high-modernism.

*Properties of Violence* is a powerful contribution to land grant studies and historical legal geography. Correia’s long perspective introduces fresh factual information and interpretations that expose how tightly linked violence and property have been in the Tierra Amarilla land grant. A small improvement would include the addition of an orientation map. Also, the dramatic cover photo of an Uzi submachine gun hanging off a tree trunk misrepresents most of the book’s content, although this curious design choice may have been the publisher’s.

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*Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America*. ERIKA DOSS. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010. Pp. ix+458, figures, notes, index. \$40.50 hardcover. ISBN 978-0-226-15938-6.

Organizing memorials by the emotion they commemorate, Doss argues that contemporary memorial mania is characterized by an “obsession with issues of memory and history and an urgent desire to express and claim those issues in visibly public contexts” (p. 2). Memorials serve as a source of symbolic capital that are readily visible on the natural landscape. The transition from monument to memorial mania is characterized by increasing acknowledgement of diversity, leading to American commemorative landscapes that personify public sentiment and emotion at significant moments and structure social narratives of identity and national purpose. These narratives are particular to today’s “Prozac nation” where memorialization becomes a method for mediating multiple and sometimes coterminous efforts to manage emotional tensions (p. 59). In successive chapters, Doss uses five emotions – grief, fear, gratitude, shame, and anger – to categorize memorials and exemplify the contemporary tradition of memorial mania.

A discursive analysis of memory management revealed that control is a pervasive theme in contemporary memorials. According to Doss, efforts to commemorate the victims of terrorist acts symbolize a need to control meaning, manage memory, and alleviate fear. Four security narratives are pervasive in contemporary terrorism memorials – naming, assumptions of innocence, survival, and the heroic sacrifice – and together they present a very specific frame.

Through this conceptualization, Doss shows how the national narrative presents a positive and unified front that is focused on survival instead of loss and that praises heroic sacrifice, diverting attention from critical examinations of causal factors. The lack of critical examination in American memorials is a pattern identified throughout the book. However, Doss never confronts this issue directly or offers insight into how we might better incorporate the causal factors leading to these events into memorials.

Somewhat oddly placed in the chapter on fear is a discussion of the minimalist architectural revolution in commemoration. In a fascinating discussion of several international memorials, Doss describes a link between minimalism and the interpretation, participation, and engagement with memorial landscapes. The importance of minimalist sculpture is "what the sculptural object does—in terms of [our] response—rather than what it is" (p. 125). Instead of pressing a particular narrative, minimalist art allows the public a sense of ownership through interpretation and participation. While her discussion of minimalism and artistic symbolism in commemoration is thought-provoking, she does not provide much in the way of a semiotic analysis of the actual text that appears on the memorials. Her discussion is not lacking in examples and analysis of memorials from an artistic perspective, but a more detailed examination of memorial text would have added greater depth to her arguments about the primacy of certain frames in American commemoration.

Unique to the contemporary commemorative landscape in the United States are memorials representing shameful acts. In an accessible psychological analysis, Doss borrows principles from Freud and Sartre to discuss the contentious issue of how to adequately memorialize shameful events through the visual act of looking. Commonalities among these types of memorials include re-humanizing victims and perpetrators (seen through the lack of abstract art and the renewal of human subjects in the commemoration process), the concept of bearing witness, and reflecting on past violence. These memorials have become a symbol of obligation and responsibility (bearing witness) in the face of any atrocity. The return to human subjects in shame memorials (versus the more popular minimalism) is linked to the relationship between the body and shame. Doss could have expanded her analysis of memorials via the geography of the body and included a productive discussion of how abstract forms of the body are used in commemoration.

Anger as memorialization is presented in the unique way in which antithetical accretion is displayed on the landscape. Anger at injustice is presented as a strong motivator for commemoration. Anger incites questions of representation and agency, dominant cultural assumptions which can lead to counter-memorials, anti-thetical accretion, or the toppling of memorials. In this chapter Doss begins to acknowledge the complexity of emotions represented by and invoked through memorials. Her discussion of the many types of anger alludes to this idea. However her analysis never goes so far as to discuss the multiplicity of emotion that can be elicited by any one particular memorial.

While Doss identifies and explains components of memorials, little attention is given to the surrounding landscape or location of the memorial. Her artistic perspective is valuable in understanding the motives and methods of commemoration, but misses some of the more intrinsic geographical concepts. Although structuring the book by emotion is logical, in reality memorials evoke a series of emotions, not just one. This complexity is never made explicit, however. In addition, Doss addresses but does not fully articulate the role of globalization in memorialization fervor. In a globalized world where memory (like news-media attention spans) is fleeting and individuality is often subsumed, the memorial mania of today describes the most basic desire: to be visible, gain power, and be remembered. The monument is a human creation designed to keep single human deeds or events alive in the minds of future generations. The shift from the monument to the memorial, from official national narratives to subjective and symbolic

expressions of disparate American sub-national collectives, underlines this concern with loss of identity. In the face of globalization and loss of communal identity, issues of ownership and belonging become particularly relevant. "Increasingly," Doss writes, "self-interest groups view the nation's memorials as the direct extension of their particular causes" (p. 34). This desire for public ownership is part of the contemporary popularity of functional public art. Art that invites public participation, exists as functional part of the environment, and has multiple purposes; allowing individuals to claim emotional (if not legal) ownership of that memorial and the concepts it embodies. Without a substantive conclusion to *Memorial Mania*, we are left with the impression that America has failed to implement commemorative justice. Unfortunately there is little information on how to mitigate this failure in the future.

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*Political Migrations on Polish Territories (1939-1950)*. PIOTREBERHARDT. Warsaw: Polish Academy of Sciences (Institute of Geography and Spatial Organization Monograph No. 12), 2011. Pp. 225, maps, tables. €26.00 hardcover. ISBN 978-83-61590-46-0.

This book focuses on an event that transformed the demography of Poland during a short period of sixteen years, from the beginning of World War II in September 1939 through its aftermath in 1950. It is written by one of Poland's leading historical geographers, Piotr Eberhardt of the Polish Academy of Sciences, who in 2003 provided us with his 560-page book called *Ethnic Groups and Population Changes in Twentieth-Century Central and Eastern Europe* (published by M.E. Sharp). In 2011, he published this new book dealing with the historical events that changed the demographic situation in Poland from a multinational country with more than 39 million people in 1939, only two-thirds of them Poles, to a true nation-state occupied by only 25 million people in 1950, about 97.8 of whom were Polish people.

The book is devoted to the forced resettlement of the population in the years between 1939 and 1950 within the territory of the Polish state, before and after the Second World War. The resettlement involved 30 million inhabitants, among them 13 million Poles, 11 million Germans, around five million Jews and about one million Ukrainians. The population migration that occurred during this short period finds no precedent in world history. The forced migration which took place in 1947-1948 during the establishment of independent India and Pakistan brought about the resettlement of about ten million people, about one-half million of whom died during that event. Here we deal with a phenomenon roughly three times bigger than that. The uniqueness of the migration event in Poland also derives from the ethnic and linguistic complexity of the people involved. This large-scale movement began in September 1939 when the German army attacked Poland. One of the aims of the attack was to conquer new territories for the German population by exterminating and deporting ethnic groups found "unfit" according to racial ideology – mainly Jews but also Poles. After nearly six years of bloodshed, about six million people died, including nearly all of the three million Jews who lived in Poland before the War. The defeat of Nazi Germany then brought about the forced exodus of about nine million Germans from the newly established Poland, with its new boundaries imposed by the Soviet Union, Britain, and United States.

Eberhardt's book is a historical geography of the largest population movement to have taken place in modern Europe. In the past, scholars have dealt with fragments of the event, mainly in books and monographs published in Polish and German. For exceptions to this trend,

English readers can refer to E. M. Kuliscer's *Europe on the Move: War and Population Changes, 1917-1947* (Columbia University Press, 1948), Yehuda Bauer's *The History of the Holocaust* (Franklin Watts, 1982), and a few other books concerning the Jewish component of this history. Eberhardt's book, however, is the first to provide an account of the entire migration event on Polish territory in English. Eberhardt draws from an exhaustive array of source material on the evacuation of the Polish people during and after the war, the Jewish Holocaust in Poland, the Germans who settled in occupied Poland and fled during the last stage of the War, and finally the evacuation of the remaining Germans from new Poland, established in 1945 east of the Oder-Neisse Rivers. Eberhardt synthesizes these sources to create one complete work that examines the phenomenon from the perspective of historical geography.

Eberhardt uncovers the underlying decisions, strategic operations, and ultimate results of the migrations that occurred from the opening of the Second World War to the last evacuation of the Ukrainians from southeast Poland. The account proceeds stage by stage, area by area, each section focusing on a different segment of the population involved. The cartography is completely original to the book and drafted by Eberhardt himself; these 23 maps provide more than illustration but serve as tools for understanding the explanations presented in text concerning the resettlement activities undertaken in Poland during the period. Collected from different sources, more than fifty tables provide visual arrangement of the numbers needed to understand the magnitude of the resettlement process: about three million Polish Jews murdered; more than one million additional Jews brought to the death camps in Poland; the flight of about six million Germans before the approaching Soviet Army; and the evacuation of more than three million Germans resettled in Potsdam.

As this book was written originally in Polish and later translated into English, one can find here and there some unconventional sentence structures and even some mistakes, mainly in syntax (the definite article "the" often is missing as this word does not exist in Polish). The translation may hinder its accessibility for English readers, but it does not undermine the book's contribution as a near-comprehensive compilation and interpretation of source material related to the resettlements. Nor does the quality of the translation undercut the book's ability to convey the sheer magnitude of the event and the roles taken by leaders of some of the most advanced countries of the world at the time – German, British, American, and Russian heads of state whose decisions led to the evacuation of millions of people, Poles and Germans, during and after the War. This book will be of interest to scholars whose work focuses specifically on wartime demography and the historical geography of World War II, but also those who are interested in military history and modern Europe more generally. At the same time, because many people are connected by relation to those who lived and died in Poland at this tragic period, this book will find a second audience by providing research that can shed light on the events that changed their lives forever.

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*The Maximum of Wilderness: The Jungle in the American Imagination.* KELLY ENRIGHT. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012. Pp. xii+187, illustrations, index. \$29.95 cloth. ISBN 9-780-8139-3228-6.

One hundred pages into *The Maximum of Wilderness*, Kelly Enright lists tips given by the naturalist William Beebe in 1958 for observing animals in deep forest. In addition to advice on breathing styles and clothing colors, Beebe instructed *National Geographic* readers to keep their



eyes half closed around wild creatures. "Animals," Beebe noted, "do not like to be stared at." This is an apt metaphor for studying "the jungle in the American imagination." If we look too intently, the subject threatens to slip away. Is the jungle a place, or a reaction to a place—a spot on the map or a state of mind? Enright manages to center her subject, for the most part, and in doing so, she has written a lively study of tropical wildness in both mass and specialist media in the twentieth century. The major development that Enright chronicles is the semantic and perceptual shift from dangerous jungle to vulnerable rainforest. She organizes her material chronologically, with seven figures standing in for particular perceptions. When linked in a chain connecting the 1910s to the 1960s, these subjects add action to introspection to show how abstraction and practice mixed under the trees.

The first two figures are Theodore Roosevelt and John Muir, both of whom experienced Brazilian forests as what H.J. Fleure might have called "regions of difficulty." Roosevelt hacked, shot, canoed, and mapped his way along the Amazon's tributaries in 1913. He believed the Amazon was destined for human conquest. By contrast, Muir appreciated the way in which the forests seemed to resist human effort in 1911, even though they scuttled his attempt to see a rare water lily in its natural setting. Through these hoary, malarial men, South American forests emerge as places of severe struggle. Their reactions to these difficulties are telling for Enright: one gritted his teeth and planned future triumphs, while the other relished the unknowable tropical expanses. The intellectual transition that Enright detects in the wider culture appears here as a difference between Roosevelt, representing nineteenth-century adventuring, and Muir, who attained the ecological mindset, but not quite the vocabulary, of his successors.

Next, Enright follows the traveling filmmakers Martin and Osa Johnson between the World Wars. This married couple produced movies that straddled the lines between "adrenaline-filled adventure and serious scientific undertaking" (p. 36) and between exaggerations of wildness and claims of domestication. Martin cut his teeth as a photographer for Jack London's *Snark* voyage before filming with Osa in a variety of tropical locales. Between 1916's *Cannibals of the South Seas* and 1937's *The Jungle Depths of Borneo*, the Johnsons depicted tropical forests as appealing milieus with their fair share of hazards but also precious, intriguing animals. Enright shrewdly imagines that zoologists and biologists watching these films recognized the value of winning the hearts of the mass audience. Proto-ecology in Muir becomes proto-rainforest conservation in the Johnsons.

Enright's fifth subject, William Beebe, evangelized a style of patient observation to find the hidden rhythms of tropical forests. His innovation, seen best in books about British Guiana, was to describe immersion in the wild both from a scientist's point of view and in the context of a spiritual journey. Beebe stressed the harmony, even community, he witnessed in the jungle. Enright's presentation of Beebe suffers slightly from a lack of trajectory. It is hard to get a hold of him as a thinker, perhaps because his activities between World War I and the late 1950s remain hazy here. Enright does a better job of fleshing out the jungle visitors in her last chapter, on the botanists David Fairchild and Richard Evans Schultes. Fairchild looked to bridge American agriculture and the "vast storehouses of utterly unknown material" (p. 116) that he found in the tropics. He grew such plants on his property in South Florida in the 1930s, believing that the taste of fresh bael fruit or "strange little pineapples" connected him directly to the experience of the wild. Schultes, too, saw a link between using tropical plants domestically and experiencing the forest firsthand. His trip to Colombia in 1939 yielded insights on the hallucinogenic, healing, and anesthetic qualities of flora that were unknown to even well-read botanists. For Enright, Schultes represents the flowering of rainforest advocacy, devoted to the protection of tropical biodiversity and the people who lived with it.

Throughout *The Maximum of Wilderness*, Enright focuses on "interplays between scientific information and cultural narratives" (p. 5) to show how jungle concepts have been more about

notions of transcendence and authenticity than about land. The book's argument rests on the connection between experts and audiences; together, they form the "American imagination." The phrases that Enright uses to describe that dialogue, however, are strategically vague. Her figures "pointed the next generation" forward; they "inspired" others; they "fostered sympathy" for faraway places; and they "struck a chord with the public." This comes close to willing a population with particular ideas into existence, or, at least, conflating accessibility with popularity. On page 76, the "popular image" of the jungle appears, and from that point, Enright treats it as if it is something she has demonstrated. She describes certain viewpoints as holding "currency" in the United States, but it is never clear how popular any of those ideas were, or if Enright's septet had anything to do with it. That said, her analysis of these individuals works well as an intellectual history, released from the burden of representing the consumers of films, magazine articles, and tropical super-foods.

Although the book may not directly address American interests in (or ignorance of) tropical forests writ large, it has much to teach us about practitioners' divergent views on tropical zones. It also shows how illuminating professional biography can be in the hands of a skilled writer. Another of Beebe's dozen lines of advice from 1958 was to speak in a "low monotone" while in the field. Enright disregards this suggestion in her prose, to the great reward of her readers. She skillfully brings to life a half-century of thought about the distant jungles that fueled fascination and fear.

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*Migration: A World History*. MICHAEL H. FISCHER. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014. Pp. xiii+149, maps, images, chronology, notes, further reading, websites, index. \$75.00 cloth, \$19.95 paper. ISBN 978-0-19-0766433-4.

Migration remains one of the most debated issues facing humanity today. It touches on such a range of vital concerns, including demography, economic development, national security, environmental sustainability, and basic human rights, to name a few. The centrality of migration should hardly be surprising given that migration has been intertwined with most of the seminal events in human history stretching from the earliest humans to move out of Africa to contemporary movements of peoples. Indeed, migration is one of the most fundamental ways in which people make and remake places and ultimately transform the Earth into our home. This is a central theme in Michael Fisher's *Migration: A World History*. As Fisher explains at the end of the preface: "From the earliest Homo sapiens to all of us today, migration, in its many forms, has remained central to world history" (p. xiii).

Fisher's book is one of the most recent entries in the *New Oxford World History* series. The series is situated within the recent shift toward so-called "big history" perspectives and covers a mix of chronological (e.g., *The World from 1450 to 1700*), thematic (e.g., *Democracy: A World History*), and geographical volumes (e.g., *China in World History*). Fisher's book fits among the thematic volumes, but it follows a rather straightforward, chronological approach to examining migration over the course of human history divided across five chapters. The first chapter covers the migration of early humans stretching from 200,000 BCE to 600 CE. Initially, humans organized themselves into nomadic and semi-nomadic bands that coalesced and divided based on population size, ecological conditions, and seasonal shifts, among other factors. Some of these bands began moving out of Africa around 70,000 to 60,000 BCE, and in a comparatively

short time, had fanned out across most of Eurasia, and somewhat later the Americas. Already by around 10,000 BCE, humans had reached most of the planet's land surface, excluding a few remote locations such as Greenland and New Zealand. Around 1000 CE, the first Scandinavians from the Old World arrived in Newfoundland and made contact with Amerindian groups, marking the point at which humanity had finally encircled the Earth. These migrations were more than a simple process of diffusion as they were interlinked with the discovery of agriculture, permanent settlements, writing, and more generally the beginnings of civilization. It is here that Fisher succeeds in weaving together a sweeping portrait of the interaction between migration and topography, climate change, demography, genetic change, technology, and the rise and fall of successive dynasties, empires, and civilizations.

Chapter two is largely framed around the rise of Islam, spanning 600 to 1450 CE, roughly from the life of Muhammad to the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople. This alone covers nearly half of the chapter, while developments in other parts of the Old World fill much of the remainder. Only the last couple pages address events in the Americas. Regardless of the region, the power of migration as a point of mixture and conflict between peoples is the main theme. Chapter three continues the story up to 1750 and generally coincides with the age of exploration and early colonialism. This period witnessed some of the first migrations possessing the speed, volume, and reach to begin connecting far flung places around the globe within a single lifetime. This new period of interconnection coincided with some of the first systematic efforts to restrict migration, such as declaration by Japanese rulers that the country was closed to outsiders or the Ming Dynasty prohibiting subjects from undertaking sea voyages abroad. Chapter four covers the late colonial period up to World War I. This period saw the peak of migration to the Americas. The chapter emphasizes the varied conditions accompanying these migrations, especially focusing on African slavery and indentured servants among some Europeans. Perhaps predictably, attempts to close off countries from migration and the wider world foundered and were eventually abandoned. The final chapter covers the relatively brief time since 1914, yet the brevity of this period still managed to entail massive, and unfortunately often very destructive, migrations. The World Wars and subsequent decolonization across much of Africa and Asia are major foci, as are more recent topics, like the plight of guest workers in the wake of the Libyan civil war or the establishment of freedom of movement within the European Union. After recounting the prominence and impact of migration since our earliest times, Fisher concludes that "...we are all migrants and migration history is the core of the world history" (p. 125). The book ends with brief chronology of major migration events in world history, a list of further readings, and websites related to migration.

Fisher is to be commended for producing a well-written and easy-reading piece while managing to cover much ground in a slim volume. Fisher contextualizes the broader narrative by drawing upon travel accounts, memoirs, and autobiographies to integrate firsthand accounts of migrant experiences, especially in the later chapters. These stories remind us of the intensely personal and emotional aspects of migration, something easy to lose when examining events far removed from our time. The book features several helpful maps and attractive images. Given the broad swath of time covered and the intent of the series to keep the volumes short and to the point, it would be unfair to criticize that this or that migration event was omitted while ones of seemingly lesser consequence were included. Those are rather subjective decisions that authors have to weigh against other considerations, like ensuring relatively balanced geographic coverage, in a book such as this. At times, the book could have made the linkages between migration and specific historical events more explicit. For example, the book succinctly summarizes the litany of territorial changes following World War I, but then simply concludes "all these changes in government led to many emigrations and immigrations" (p. 106). The book could have dug a bit

deeper into the assumptions and motivations of the Allied Powers during the peace talks that resulted in widespread territorial restructuring, although this too might be an unfair criticism given the prescribed length of the series.

Perhaps the most substantive critique would be that the book never explicitly defines migration. Instead, the book adopts a rather vague notion that nearly all of us are migrants, since “very few people remain in their parents’ home throughout life, never spending significant time away” (p. xiii). This leads to the characterization of Napoleon as an immigrant from Corsica and his military campaigns as migration events. Similarly, Stalin was also a migrant from Georgia, while the Chinese communists enduring the Long March were emigrants. In many ways, the book is more about mobility than migration, at least as migration is traditionally defined. Regardless, Fisher is to be commended for producing an excellent introduction to the role of migration through human history that will prove useful for those seeking a quick, broad overview of the topic.

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*California through Russian Eyes, 1806-1848.* JAMES R. GIBSON, compiler, translator, and editor. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013. Pp. 492, photographs, tables, glossary, bibliography, index. \$45.00 hardcover. ISBN 9-780-8706-2421-6.

Volume 2 of the University of Oklahoma Press series of Early California Commentaries, *California Through Russian Eyes* is a compilation of thirty-two translated reports, journals, letters, and memoirs written by Russians who visited Alta (New) California in the first half of the nineteenth century. Active in Alaska since the mid-eighteenth century, advances in shipbuilding allowed a growing number of Russians to visit California shores for trade and restocking of provisions. Detailed accounts tell of not only the landscape of Alta California, but of Spanish garrisons and missions, relations between colonists and the indigenous population, the cultures and outward appearances of the (Native) Americans, and the potential for trade in the region. As scholars of the U.S. West seldom have access to Russian materials, this volume is of particular value for the access it provides beyond Spanish—and later English—language sources. As scholarly disciplines are often divided by country, this volume reveals the interconnectivity of the Pacific, as ships continued on to Hawaii, Manila, Calcutta, or Canton. The collection documents the decline of the Spanish empire and the tumultuous transitions of the territory from Spain to Mexico and finally the United States.

One of the most compelling documents in the collection is an excerpt from Russian state official Nikolay Rezanov’s report on his six-week visit to San Francisco Bay in 1806. Rezanov is known best for his ill-fated romance with the beautiful Concepción Argüello, daughter of the commandant of the local *presidio* (fortress). More significant than the officer’s love interest, however, was his confidence that trade with California could provide abundantly for Russia’s possessions in Alaska and the Far East. Rezanov reported enthusiastically on Alta California’s potential to supply wheat, cattle, wool, horses, and wine. Warning the Minister of the Interior that he had to act quickly — “For God’s sake, gracious sire, examine patriotically the circumstances of this territory” (p. 56) — Rezanov proposed building granaries and organizing regular trade with Canton. (The Minister evidently listened, since in 1812 the Russian Fort Ross was founded to the north of San Francisco.) The Alta California portrayed by Rezanov was a paradise on earth. He praised the Spanish for their efficient administration.



A very different picture emerges in documents that follow. While Rezanov focused on the achievements of the Spanish, subsequent Russian visitors witnessed a California in decline. California was expensive, several visitors noted, bringing no gain to the Spaniards "except the conversion of several hundred heathens into Christians" (p. 90). Fewer and fewer Spanish ships visited, leaving missions unprovisioned and salaries unpaid. Future visitors agreed with Rezanov that the land was abundant, writing excitedly of "watermelons, muskmelons, peaches...grapes...wheat, beans, peas" (p. 112), as well as various trees, animals, birds, minerals, and precious metals (pp. 200-205). Yet this abundance did not bring prosperity to the "half-wild, sleepy, and indolent Spaniards" (p. 168) who lived there in 1821. The situation only worsened when Mexico gained independence, cutting off Spanish aid to the territory completely. The ensuing decades saw frequent uprisings, adding chaos to poverty, neglect, and soon drought as well. "What remains of niggardly nature is being destroyed by internal strife and violent anarchy!" (p. 354) remarked a visitor in 1830. When the Mexican government decided to secularize California missions in 1833, entire settlements fell into disrepair. It was clear to the Russians that not California, but Californios [California-born Spaniards] were to blame.

While Californians today imagine kind friars and peaceful Indians coexisting in harmony at the region's twenty-one missions, a recurrent theme of the Russian reports is the misfortune of the California indigenous population. Already in 1806, Rezanov was told by the governor that nearly all the Indians perished in Baja California, and that since the establishment of missions, two-fifths of those in Alta California had as well (p. 70). Later visitors referred to the melancholy of the Indian converts, their inability to adjust to a European way of life, and their often premature deaths. Since the Indians did not understand the Catholic rituals they practiced, a Russian who visited in 1816 supposed that "the deepest gloom must rule the minds and hearts of these poor people, who can only mimic the external ceremonies by eye and then copy them" (p. 89). Some visitors described an even worse scenario: "Even the situation of Negro slaves cannot be worse," an 1824 visitor lamented. "The Indians are subject totally to the unlimited arbitrariness and tyranny of the friars" (p. 286). To guard their chastity, young Indian women were kept locked up, while the men faced "corporal punishment, imprisonment, and shackles" for unpunctual fulfillment of the friars' demands (pp. 292-93).

Russians themselves demonstrated a variety of attitudes toward the Indian population. While they lamented their mistreatment and forcible conversion, they shared European stereotypes of the natives as "wild," "half-savage and savage tribes" (pp. 252, 255). One Russian visitor made reference to the Indians' "extreme backwardness," declaring that "this stupid and plain people...ranks even lower than the inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego and Van Dieman's Land" (p. 293). Yet they consistently reported positive relations with the Native Americans, and remained hopeful about their civilization. Commenting on the region's agricultural potential, an 1821 visitor suggested that the Indians could be taught to work industriously ("without the necessity of having to buy black slaves to do so" [p. 155]). "Many travelers compare the Indians ...to cattle on account of their [i.e., the Indians'] marked stupidity," a frequent visitor from Alaska noted, but he explained that it was not the Indians' fault, but that the land's abundance incited no need for mental engagement (p. 348).

The 1830s saw the beginning of the end of Mexican California. Once the government began granting land to non-Catholic settlers, Russians reported (U.S.) Americans moving westward and settling near the Russian Fort Ross. There was concern about a possible American takeover. By the 1840s, visitors encountered Europeans and Asians, blacks and whites, who lived not at missions, but in towns with taverns, mills, fine homes, and large trading houses. The document collection ends in 1849, following the cession of the territory to the United States. Referring to the discovery of gold in the region, the final report describes Alta California as "an enchanting land," a "New

Eldorado" (p. 459), lamenting Russia's sale of Fort Ross in 1842. Despite the hardships the visitors witnessed, the message they transmitted to St. Petersburg can perhaps best be summed up by a Russian saying: *vsegda tam luchshe, gde nas net!* It is always better where we are not!

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*Roads to Power: Britain Invents the Infrastructure State.* JO GULDI. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012. Pp. 297, b&w illustrations, index. \$42.00 hardcover. ISBN 978-0-674-05759-3.

Roads have long offered an attractive topic for research in historical geography, for they combine and concretize many broad questions through their linking-together of the landscape. Indeed, few historical geographers have made it to the end of their career without managing to comment on the importance of roads, and the field is therefore well-covered by a diversity of works ranging from Carl Sauer's "The Road to Cibola" (1932) to J. B. Jackson's "Roads Belong in the Landscape" (1994).

Yet even a thoroughly studied topic can yield important new insights when subjected to a fresh draw of primary sources, as Jo Guldi proves in her fascinating book *Roads to Power*. While many scholars of landscape have recently turned their attention to the phenomenological kinetics of mobility (well-summarized in Merriman et al.'s roundtable "Landscape, mobility, practice" [2008]), Guldi reminds us that roads still run through structures of power, finance, technology, and politics. By closely scrutinizing the forces which drove a wave of Parliamentary road construction in Britain from 1726 to 1848, Guldi demonstrates how turnpike authority, centralized in London under the aegis of expert engineers, was a key component in the construction of British unification and hegemony in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. She couples this political story of a massifying "infrastructure state" with an attention to the social experiences of travelers, who alternately welcomed and detested the new roads, and who fashioned new class behaviors to suit an increasingly interconnected nation.

The book targets the conventional wisdom that Britain's ascent on the world stage during this period was characterized by a *laissez-faire* politics in which Parliament allowed the Industrial Revolution to follow its natural course. To the contrary, Guldi argues, "both the construction and finance of the transport revolution were set in gear by government funding, made possible by the emergence of a state bureaucracy" (pp. 28–29). The consolidation of Scotland and England—and later Ireland—into the new political confection called Britain led the burgeoning "fiscal-military" state to preempt local turnpike trusts and begin constructing a national transportation network which allowed troops, commercial wagoners, and mail carriers to stitch the formerly disparate regions together. Guldi is particularly effective at showing how Scottish representatives to Parliament, through strategic control of infrastructure committees, were instrumental in drumming up the political support necessary for the new road-building projects. The national roads therefore become financial transfer mechanisms from England's wealthy core to the poorer, newly-integrated British peripheries.

A new class of technical professionals also formed an important bloc of political support for the "infrastructure state," even as their use of measurements and formulae made their arguments seem apparently apolitical. The engineers Thomas Telford and John Loudon Macadam, through their personal competition and their rubbishing of vernacular turnpike-maintenance techniques, popularized the idea that British roads should be standardized, centrally planned, and nationally

financed. Thus, even when their projects vastly overran cost projections—as in the Menai Straits Bridge on the Holyhead Road—they enjoyed generous financial support from the state throughout this period.

By 1848, Guldi argues, a backlash against the Parliamentary roads brought this first era of state infrastructure support to a close. She traces two main currents of discontent. On the one hand, radicals and proto-socialists such as William Cobbett and Richard Milnes worried that the roads intruded on local customary rights and served little use to the poor, for whom the national commercial trade carried by the roads brought more oppression than opportunity. On the other, economic libertarians such as Edward Knatchbull and Joshua Toulmin Smith resented the way that centralized roads redistributed wealth, and argued for a return to local management. Ultimately the rhetoric of the former group was swallowed up by the more powerful political position of the latter.

Here it becomes clear that *Roads to Power* is not just a work of historical geography but a political parable for the present day—a hunch confirmed by the blurb from the electronic media activist Tim O'Reilly, who calls the book “required for those who aim to shape the twenty-first century.” Guldi is straightforward about the symmetry which she sees between Britain's infrastructure age and the late twentieth-century digital age: “History was repeating itself,” she says in the conclusion (p. 208). Both then and now a period of state-financed, nationalistic infrastructure investment gave way to a hostile backlash against centralization, articulated in both radical and libertarian terms. Guldi furthermore cautions that the participatory utopian prospects of infrastructure-driven connectivity are not automatically guaranteed by the march of technology. In a fascinating (though somewhat orphaned) final chapter, she shows how Britain's national roads, far from ushering in a hopeful era of sociability amongst a newly-united people, in fact became the scene for a renewed entrenchment of behavioral distinctions along class lines. Citizens who had once walked together on the same mud roads now traveled in total isolation from one another, with the new middle class developing a polite and privileged world consisting of private coaches and hotels. Guldi's implication—that our digital era faces the same forces of centrifugal class fragmentation and political mistrust—is self-evident.

One difficulty with *Roads to Power* is that it is in some parts ineffectively signposted, and thus, within the impressive mass of primary material which Guldi has accumulated, it is sometimes difficult to discern any given paragraph's relative subordination to the larger argumentative arc. Scholars of an internationalist bent may also find the book's meager comparisons between Britain and other contemporary infrastructure state projects frustrating. However, in its impressive depth of research, its careful reading of history, and its deft delivery of an important and relevant political lesson, *Roads to Power* is a valuable new look at a favorite topic for the historical geographer.

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*Pastoral and Monumental: Dams, Postcards, and the American Landscape.* DONALD C. JACKSON. Pittsburgh, PA: The University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013. Pp. x+332, images, index. \$34.95 hardcover. ISBN 9-780-8229-4426-3.

Donald C. Jackson's book examines Americans' relationships with dams and damming projects as recorded and interpreted through the medium of picture postcards. Focusing on a period from the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries, Jackson approaches both dams and postcards as part of a larger trends in American history. The book is clearly a passion project,

and does a fine job repackaging some of the more abstract points about the human-environment relationship that can be found in cultural geography, environmental history, and science and technology studies (STS) scholarship. The key to the book, as many might suspect, are the illustrations.

Jackson identifies a two-pronged thesis for his book which links together the subjects of dams and picture postcards. He argues that postcards represent a very particular social and cultural medium, capturing many different elements of a rapidly industrializing and technologizing United States. Dams, ranging from small local “crib” dams to major New Deal-era projects, are a similarly unique infrastructural representation of “America’s technologically-driven political economy” (p. 10). For these reasons, Jackson asserts that dam postcards are far more than “souvenirs of an antiquarian past,” but rather “an entrée into understanding how Americans have used hydraulic technology to transform the environment” in both positive and negative ways (*ibid.*).

The book is organized into eight chapters and postscript along with bibliographic notes and an index. In addition to introducing the major arguments of the text, chapter one provides a lengthy overview of the entire book. Crucially, it is here that Jackson makes a number of connections between the social history of the first half of the twentieth century and the history of dam technology and design, illustrating how specific choices were made in the dam design and construction process to send a particular ideological message to the general public. Subsequent chapters examine different components of this connection while also discussing the role of picture postcards. Chapter two in particular examines the production of these “texts” and how changing materials and techniques contributed to new types of images. Jackson focuses on a “Golden Age” of U.S. postcard culture – perhaps, a “Golden Age” of U.S. postal culture more generally – culminating shortly after the end of the First World War.

Subsequent chapters offer studies of various elements of this dam-picture postcard hybrid culture, and are all richly illustrated with examples drawn mainly from the author’s personal collection. Chapter three offers a useful primer on dam construction, explaining how engineers made choices about materials and design. While certainly the most engineering-heavy part of the book, this chapter does a fine job of illustrating the “Monumental” nature of dams referenced in the title. Chapter four offers a look at when dam projects fail, focusing on significant disasters of the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, most of which (for better or worse) were also documented with picture postcards. Though interesting in its own right, this chapter may have benefitted from drawing connections to the geographic literature on disasters and memorialization, as there are several points in this section of the book which suggest that dam disasters and other engineering failures may hold insights to scholars studying other types of catastrophes.

Chapter five looks at the reasons for using dams in the first place. Although this chapter feels out of place organizationally, like chapter three it offers a strong primer about the reasons for damming along with good illustrations of dams built for that specific purpose. The longest of the book, this chapter would be excellent accompaniment to any course focusing on environmental technologies. Chapter six shifts gears to focus on the meaning of major damming projects constructed during the New Deal, including the Hoover Dam, Norris Dam and the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Bonneville and Grand Coulee Dams, dams in the Central Valley of California, and the project at Fort Peck. This chapter combines well with the previous two for looking at the specific circumstances – both historical and technological – that surrounded each project. Of course, more detailed studies have been completed of each project, but the text makes for an interesting synoptic case.

Chapter seven is the first in the text to directly approach the environmental concerns associated with hydraulic projects. This chapter is certainly one of the more potent and discussable



parts of the text, tracing opposition to dam projects since the late nineteenth century, but focusing on the controversy surrounding Hetch Hetchy. Again, and most curiously, this chapter features illustrations of the controversy itself illustrated with picture postcards. This chapter could have been longer, or perhaps integrated more closely with chapter five on the uses of dams; however, the purpose of the book is not to focus on such controversial issues, either.

Chapter eight and the postscript both look at the demise of postcard culture amidst the rise of amateur photography in the U.S., a culture which has undoubtedly been even further impacted by digital and smartphone photography. These sections and especially chapter eight would have been strengthened with a discussion of contemporary photo culture and how dams figure in. This is perhaps symptomatic of the book's main shortcoming, which is that it doesn't always deliver on the promise to trace dam history as part of a broader techno-cultural history of the U.S., and in particular readers are left hanging as the book ends when strong and organized public concern with environmental protection began in earnest around the time of the Viet Nam War. Perhaps these connections are missed due to the organization of the book's chapters, which feels a bit random at times. The index also would have benefitted from a geographic sorting of the dams featured in the book's many illustrations, which would aid in locating projects with local or hometown significance.

The strengths outweigh these minor issues, however, and in particular the book's ability to literally show students how visual imagery contributes to the formation of environmental discourse. These images in the book (and those like them, related to a range of U.S. environments like National Parks, forests, shorelines, aerial photography, etc.) are critical to informing what we think of as "natural." As such *Pastoral and Monumental* is an interesting and unique project that could be useful to scholars and courses in environmental history, cultural geography, and STS.

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*Native and Spanish New Worlds: Sixteenth-Century Entradas in the American Southwest and Southeast.* CLAY MATHERS, JEFFREY M. MITCHEM, and CHARLES M. HAECKER, editors. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2013. Pp. xii+382, maps, tables, appendices, index, references. \$60.00 hardcover. ISBN 978-0-8165-3020-5.

In recent years universities, federally funded granting agencies, and research institutes have increasingly encouraged (and outright pushed) scholars to engage in high-profile, interdisciplinary research projects. Under this scenario a collection of experts from cognate fields convene to answer some of sciences' most compelling and complex questions. There are obvious challenges when trying to mesh research from disparate fields (e.g., background, approach, and terminology), but all too frequently the published product of such collaborative work is a collection of disjunct essays where editor(s) seldom make connections across chapters in the anthology. I am pleased (and relieved) to report that *Native and Spanish New Worlds* is an exception. The book is a tightly woven collection of essays that are well integrated around a central theme and unified purpose. If interdisciplinary research is the wave of the future, here is an example of how to do it correctly.

Starting at the 2009 Society for American Archaeology meeting, an aggregate of scholars from anthropology, archaeology, geography (dendrochronology), and history met numerous times to engage in dialog that would help us better understand the "interactions between sixteenth-century Native and European communities in what is now the Southwestern and Southeastern

United States" (p. 2). Although the book considers all of the major Spanish colonial expeditions that trooped around the greater Spanish borderlands, the focus is on the interactions between Francisco Vázquez de Coronado (1540-1541) and the Puebloan peoples of present-day New Mexico as well as between Hernando de Soto (1539-1543) and the Mississippian cultures of the Southeast (extending from modern Florida and the Carolinas to eastern Texas).

The book begins with an introductory chapter that explains how the edited volume was intellectually conceived and discussion about the incomplete nature of existing data sources. The remainder of the book is divided into seven sections each addressing a specific aspect of Native-Spanish interaction. Section I (Native Perspectives) is a single chapter that attempts to bring to light a Native American perspective on the Spanish entradas. The authors draw out active Zuni voices to interpret Spanish presence in North America, but sadly the chapter is largely anecdotal and incredibly underdeveloped. It is no wonder that this chapter is largely forgotten in the concluding section. Sections II through VI carefully consider such topics as history of contact, climate change, introduction of diseases, political organization, and external conflict. Each of these sections follows a predictable pattern beginning with a relevant discussion of conditions in the American Southwest followed by a look at the same issue in the American Southeast. Clearly the individuals selected to write each of the chapters in these five sections are luminaries in their field, however it is understandable if readers find some of the chapters less gripping than others. This is not a criticism leveled at any of the authors' work, rather it is simply the nature of the beast; the book is not everything to everyone. In Section VII (Discussion) most of the loose ends are tied up. Chapter 14 does a superb job of comparing and contrasting the regional Colonial Spanish entrada strategies. For example, in the Southeast the Spanish transitioned from a militaristic approach to missionizing activity, whereas in the Southwest they relentlessly pursued the accumulation of wealth. The last chapter is by far the best and should be read first. Not only does it outline the entire book, but it helps explain the key findings within each chapter.

An underlying theme coursing through the book (sometimes subtle, sometimes overt) is the questioning of conventional wisdom and a call for more critical debate. Readers are repeatedly reminded that because most data available on the Spanish Colonial period are incomplete (e.g., one-sided historical accounts and limited archaeological evidence), conclusions reached by early scholars are mistaken at best. Within each of the book's four main themes (climate, diseases, political organization, and conflict) there are ample examples to illustrate that a new perspective is needed if we are to fully understand early Native-Spanish interaction. For example, Chapter 5 shows that climate variability (annual fluctuations between hot and dry to cold and wet) had a more significant impact on the success and failure of the early Spanish entradas than once believed. In Chapter 9, Richard Chapman asserts that instead of the Pueblo peoples living in large concentrated settlements year-round, they dispersed throughout the greater American southwest between early spring and late fall because it was a more sustainable way to use the land. My favorite example is found in Chapters 7 and 8 where readers learn that there was no pandemic during the sixteenth century and the Native American population did not readily succumb to European diseases as once believed. Instead, diseases were but one of many variables that led to population decline over centuries of interaction with the Spanish. Collectively the authors have effectively demonstrated that a new perspective with new dialog is needed if we are to fully understand Native-Spanish interaction.

With the exception of Chapter 2 (as explained above), the book is a tremendous success and a very enjoyable read. It is well organized and free of jargon. Scholars of various backgrounds and experience will benefit from reading it and the dense bibliography will undoubtedly serve as a valuable resource. The volume would be very appropriate for a graduate-level seminar, spawning many healthy discussions. My only complaint as a geographer is the lack of high-quality maps to

support the text. Sure, there are maps, but they are of poor quality and very limited value. Setting aside this relatively minor criticism, I commend the editors and the authors for a great example of how to bring together scholars with diverse backgrounds and publish an anthology that works as a unit. In this case, the whole really is greater than the sum of its individual parts.

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*They Saved the Crops: Labor, Landscape, and the Struggle Over Industrial Farming in Bracero- Era California.* DON MITCHELL. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012. Pp. ix+529, notes, bibliography, index. \$26.95 paper. ISBN 978-0-8203-4176-7.

In *They Saved the Crops*, Don Mitchell provides a history of the California bracero program that is both richly theoretical and solidly grounded in extensive archival research. Providing a narrative that will appeal to both geographers and historians alike, Mitchell draws explicitly from the work of classic cultural geographers such as Carl Sauer and Pierce Lewis to emphasize the constructedness of the California landscape, reframing agricultural land as a site of struggle between competing versions of social development. In practice, a theoretical emphasis on economic and spatial systems leads Mitchell to focus on California braceros' stark daily working and living arrangements, demonstrating that growers intentionally allowed desperate living conditions and facilitated job instability in order to ensure braceros' relative powerlessness in the face of grower exploitation.

Backing up his arguments with an array of government documents, union correspondence, and oral histories, Mitchell argues decisively that growers invented the domestic labor shortage that justified the establishment and continuation of the bracero program. Expanding on this point, Mitchell begins his narrative in the 1930s and argues that the turn to bracero labor was due to a combination of factors: the systematic rationalization of the rural landscape and agricultural labor; the consolidation of California agriculture under a few anglo growers; and the prevalence of race-based assumptions that led growers to decide that domestic workers would not be interested in farm labor. With this list in mind, Mitchell argues that growers understood the bracero program not as an emergency, wartime boost in the labor force, but as a way to ensure a steady supply of "just in case" (p. 138) labor that could serve as strikebreakers and depress wages for both domestic and foreign workers.

Mitchell goes on to offer a largely familiar history of the bracero program populated by greedy growers, apathetic government administrators, and protracted labor strikes. However, within this discussion, Mitchell emphasizes that growers used the bracero program as an opportunity to change the very landscape of agriculture, reducing farm workers to pure labor power — to predictable factors in the system of production. Upon gaining control of Works Progress Administration camps after World War II, California growers set about replacing family residences with bunkhouses and dismantling worker community centers and social organizations. Mitchell spends a great deal of time describing the degrading working conditions that followed the early WPA system. Growers allowed camps to deteriorate, with workers lacking access to flush toilets, heat in the winter, and, at times, even potable drinking water. As California agricultural expanded and growers imported more and more braceros, these factors, along with the camps' extreme geographic isolation, meant that almost all domestic workers were driven out of agricultural employment. In this way, Mitchell argues, growers were able to create a self-fulfilling prophecy in which domestic workers refused farm jobs due to bad infrastructure and worse pay even as growers claimed that there just was no domestic labor pool available to do the work.

For Mitchell, the structural changes wrought by the bracero program were ultimately so fundamental that it was almost impossible for either union activists or the state and federal government to conceive of any viable labor alternative. Although a series of strikes led by groups such as the National Farm Labor Union and Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee were mounted against big growers, Mitchell argues that these strikes only succeeded in achieving minor improvements in wages, not the needed structural change. At the same time, growers successfully appealed for public support, citing the very landscape of labor they had constructed as an explanation for the seeming lack of options. Buying into these explanations, as well as the regional economic importance of big California growers, Congress again and again extended the life of the “emergency” bracero program and responded to calls for its disbandment with a series of largely-ignored, investigative studies. Mitchell sees the tide turning, with government inspectors arriving at bracero camps to punish the worst offenders, only after broad public sentiment turned against the bracero program in the late 1950s.

Mitchell’s theoretical argument is most compelling when paired with the individual stories of braceros, activists, and labor leaders. To this end, he relies heavily on correspondence from labor leader Ernesto Galarza to describe worker experiences and document the complex relationships between regional labor unions. Similarly, he incorporates the personal narratives of colorful figures such as doctor-cum-labor-activist Ben Yellen and Henry Anderson, a Berkeley graduate student who advocated on behalf of braceros. In contrast, however, a surprisingly small number of individual braceros make it into his narrative, giving Mitchell’s otherwise exceedingly well-researched study a lopsided feel. Similarly, while Mitchell makes passing reference to the systematic discrimination of women in agricultural jobs and the importance of family housing to labor patterns, greater theoretical attention to the gendered nature of the agricultural landscape would add further depth to his argument. All this said, Mitchell provides a nuanced, complex study within what is already a lengthy volume. His thoughtful theoretical engagement with issues of landscape, power, race, and class offers a useful, new perspective on a well-studied period in the history of labor in America.

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*American Capitals: A Historical Geography.* CHRISTIAN MONTÈS. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2014. University of Chicago Geography Research Paper, No. 247. Pp. iv+394, maps, halftones, diagrams, index. \$65.00 cloth; \$7.00 to \$52.00 e-book versions. ISBN 978-0-226-08048-2 cloth; 978-0-226-08051-2 e-book.

The fifty state capitals in the United States seem to include oddities. Eight are small cities (under 40,000 people) in states that have larger cities; others are somewhat larger but pale in comparison to other cities in their state. Some are remote from parts of the population. Dalhart, a town in Texas, is farther from Austin than it is from Santa Fe, Denver, Oklahoma City, Topeka, and Cheyenne (the last two in states not even bordering Texas). Juneau is a small city in “Southeast Alaska,” which is a large region (about six percent of the state) but connected to the rest of Alaska by a strip of U.S. land less than 20 miles wide at one point. You can’t reach Juneau by car without a ferry ride. When Alaska became a state in 1959, Juneau remained the capital even though Anchorage was more than four times as big. Many think Juneau is the most beautiful capital, but its capitol less beautiful than many a post office.



There's much more to America's capitals than all that. In his book Christian Montès shows us general patterns—locations, sizes, economic structures, recent economic successes and failures, senses of identity—and explains the patterns make sense considering how the nation and its states have evolved through history. His book is a solid achievement, and I recommend it heartily to historical, regional, and urban geographers. Some ideas are original, and certainly the book as a whole is an original assemblage. Teachers will find it a valuable source for lectures, discussions, and student research. They can ask students to study a city in the light of Montès's generalizations, and to challenge him on various points. The exposition is not technical, so one can use the book with beginning students.

Montès, a French geographer at Université Lumière Lyon 2, covers many topics, has a wealth of quantitative data, and jam-packs the book with *petit faits vrais*. He draws on archives and a wide range of secondary literature, including state and city histories and interpretations by geographers and other social scientists. He cites 372 references. He applies standard concepts like the urban hierarchy and trade centers, and although I don't remember him using the phrase, one may see a sophisticated use of "site and situation." Cartographer Marie-Laure Trémélo provides useful diagrams illustrating the author's arguments.

Much that seems odd isn't, really. A lack of centrality is generally the result of choices made by small populations at the time of statehood (earlier, for the original thirteen). Montès examines those choices in chapters 3 and 4. From the initial conditions, patterns of locations, sizes, and other features emerged from historical processes that in no way resembled periodic spatial optimization by social planners. Economies changed radically, but path-dependence was enormous. At statehood (1864) Nevada's population (under 40,000) chose their territorial capital, Carson City, to be the state capital. Now, Nevada has about 2.8 million people, Las Vegas—400-plus miles away—is more than ten times as big as Carson City, Reno is more than four times as big, and the capital is ... Carson City. In Texas any remoteness of Austin is due more to Texas's retaining its enormous size throughout history than to Austin's location. My own capital is Boston. Four other capitals—Albany, Montpelier, Hartford, and Concord—are closer to me. I often feel remote from "Boston" (a.k.a. as "Big Dig") as political complex, but Boston was a coastal port of entry long before my town existed, and history kept us in a corner of Massachusetts rather than in New York or Vermont (the town abuts both states) or Connecticut (origin of some early settlers) or New Hampshire (which escaped from Massachusetts in 1691).

Three successive chapters (5, 6, and 7) are of special note: one is on history up to the 1950s, the next on history since then, and the third has three case studies that represent important categories for Montès. The cases are: Columbus, which grew from small size to overtake Cleveland and Cincinnati and become a player on the national scene; Des Moines, which became Iowa's most important city yet remains medium-sized on the national scale; Frankfort, which has remained a small place ("the ever-small capital" (p. 275)). It is a real plus that Montès puts the history of each city (and metro area, for Columbus and Des Moines) in the context of its *state's* evolution in the national economy. However, he slights the income and employment effects of medical centers and branches of state universities (what Tim Bartik and George Erickcek call "eds and meds" effects).

As we would expect, a major theme in Montès's history is the role of a capital's economic hinterland. It couldn't develop a sizeable hinterland on its own, there being so many forces largely beyond its control: railroads, airline routes, the spread of various industries (manufacturing, higher education and medical care, high level producer services), internal and international migration, and the later decline of manufacturing. State boundaries were not trade area boundaries, political centrality and political power didn't necessarily imply economic centrality and economic power. Being "central" in a state was not sufficient—a nearby city in another state could have better situation.

Other chapters show Montès's remarkable range. We find cultural geography in a nice chapter on capitals as "places of memory" (p. 14). He brings in place names, sites, plats, architecture of capitols, public spaces. He describes states' frequent moves of capitals in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (the "migration of capitals" (p. 62)). When Sherman captured Atlanta in 1864 he wasn't capturing the capital of Georgia; Atlanta did not replace Milledgeville until 1868 (Sherman devastated Milledgeville, too). Of more general interest is a chapter on the fate of cities that were once capitals but then displaced—87 of them, in 44 states. Some did quite well, for example New Castle (Delaware), Williamsburg, Iowa City, Golden (Colorado), and Monterey. Heritage tourism and favorable situation in a metropolitan area were major factors.

Montès ventures sweeping generalizations, and some are wrong or at least seriously misleading. Teachers may use them as openings for student discussion, but they need to correct them before class ends. I mention just two here. He says that in a capital "[M]ost state employees live in the suburbs or nearby metropolises, where they pay almost no taxes, leaving the inner city to crumble" (p. 311). What about state income and sales taxes, and redistribution (through "state aid formulas") to local governments? He also says, "[A] capitol is not a factory" (p. 83) and "[A] capital primarily produces laws rather than goods" (p. 309). That misses the point that a state government produces *services*: education and research, medical care, highways, law enforcement and justice, information, tourism marketing, and more. Many of the main bureaucrats that manage production work in the capital city, and state universities are not unlike modern factories.

Montès thanks his editors. I can't say "Amen." There are many writing problems. They don't reduce the book's value drastically for most readers, but one must use it with caution. It is too long and too crammed with minutiae that will interest only narrow specialists, yet specialists will know that Montès couldn't help but pick out facts selectively. The proofreading is less meticulous than we expect from Chicago.

A map showing all 50 capitals is small and hard to read. In each state it shows only the capital if the capital is the largest city, otherwise only the capital and the largest city. My own choice would be to show San Diego, San Jose, and San Antonio, which are in the U.S.'s top ten in size, and San Francisco, Fort Worth, and El Paso, in the second ten, and also Reno, Tulsa, Tampa, Orlando, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, and Charleston (South Carolina).

Finally, there are real clinkers, which provoke frowns as they pile up. One example: the number of presidents and vice-presidents from the state of New York (p. 212). Montès misses one president and *ten* vice-presidents; surely his "fact" screamed "Check me!" On the other hand, why is that fact there in the first place? Other examples: where the Civil War began (p. 236); the extent of insurance business in New York City (p. 243); the origin of the firm Delco (p. 259); mixing up two different museums in Albany (p. 237). Three involve state universities: the names of those in Madison and Lincoln (p. 230); the location of Texas A&M (p. 227); when SUNY came to Albany (p. 51). Finally, embarrassing in a geographer's book: Salt Lake City is "the largest city between Denver and the Pacific Coast" (p. 244). Even if by "between" we mean at roughly the similar latitude, Reno and Sacramento are larger.

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*Arcadian America: The Death and Life of an Environmental Tradition*. AARON SACHS. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013. Pp. xi+368, maps, notes, figures, index. \$35.00 cloth. ISBN 978-0-300-17640-7.

One of the challenges of teaching nature-society relationships in geography is provoking students to think beyond a dualistic notion of nature and society. The challenge is compounded when attempting to explore how nineteenth-century Americans thought about and acted upon nature. The Arcadian tradition in American environmental thought provides an outstanding avenue for considering these complex ideas. In *Arcadian America*, Aaron Sachs explores the middle landscapes that Arcadian thinkers and artists attempted to capture and create as they wrestled with the borderlands of nature and culture, life and death, and wilderness and modernity. The cast for *Arcadian America* includes well-known nineteenth-century American writers and thinkers such as Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Walt Whitman, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Washington Irving, and Margaret Fuller, as well as those who may be less well-known to history and geography majors, such as Andrew Jackson Downing, William Cullen Bryant, Ignatius Donnelly, Horace William Shaler Cleveland, Hamlin Garland, Henry George, and Edward Bellamy. As important as the writers, activists, and planners to the story are the works of artists such as Thomas Cole, Winslow Homer, and Albert Bierstadt and the Civil War photographs of Timothy H. O'Sullivan. What these diverse figures have in common is their attempts to contemplate—perhaps comprehend—modernity, mortality, and morality at the intersection of society and nature, civilization and savagery. Central to and representative of this tradition are the garden cemeteries, such as Mount Auburn near Boston, that were established in antebellum New England.

Yet *Arcadian America* is not simply a review of literary and artistic works of the Arcadian tradition. Sachs weaves together the lives and thought of nineteenth-century Americans with a memoir of his own experiences with death, illness, self-doubt, sadness, regret, friendship, anxiety, familial relationships, aging, parenthood, and identity. This combination of history and memoir is what makes *Arcadian America* a creative and unique contribution to the literature on nineteenth-century American environmental thought. Sachs humanizes the figures of the past by juxtaposing their life stories with his own. There is a danger, of course, in attempting to draw parallels between past and present lives, but Sachs avoids forcing explicit comparisons while offering the juxtaposition as a way of illuminating the broader human condition. The “lesson-from-the-past” that is proposed for readers to contemplate is how nineteenth-century Arcadians both imagined and established landscapes that synthesized the tensions of urban and rural, work and repose, motion and rootedness, life and death, and nature and society. The narrative arc drawn is from the antebellum height of Arcadianism, to reconciliation with the trauma of the Civil War, to the decline of Arcadian thought with the ascendance of Progressivist efficiency, rational management, and utilitarianism. Yet the decline of the tradition did not spell the death of the consciousness cultivated by antebellum writers and artists. Sachs explains, “The Arcadian tradition, though it lost momentum in the last third of the nineteenth century, never died or disappeared, because Americans remained undecided about modernity, and about its tendency to wipe the slate clean and plow under the past and rebuild from the ground up...We have never been entirely modern” (p. 350).

The historical geographer will spot important geographical concepts—cultural landscape, iconography, nature-culture, identity—but these ideas are mostly implicit rather than explicit in the narrative of *Arcadian America*. Sachs acknowledges his debt to the work of William Cronon, but he does not recognize or apply the analytical and theoretical perspectives of relevant geographers such as Denis Cosgrove, John Brinckerhoff Jackson, Wilbur Zelinsky, Donald Mitchell, Robert

David Sack, and the like. Yet it would not be fair to criticize Sachs for not following disciplinary pheromones outside of his area of interest and expertise. Sachs is an American Studies scholar with a rich knowledge of literary and artistic sources, and the historical geographer has much to learn from the touchstones of his field. Hamlin Garland's *A Son of the Middle Border* (1917), for instance, is rarely on the radar in American historical geography, yet Sachs' exploration of Garland's life and work suggests that such sources can inform geographical understandings of the construction of cultural and symbolic landscapes. In *A Son of the Middle Border*, Garland "takes a grimly honest look at both the triumphs of frontier development – which were always fleeting, and always fraught – and the clear difficulties of pioneering, the disadvantages of coming of age under a regime of oppressive agricultural labor, far removed from centers of urban culture and intellectual diversity" (p. 215). Similarly, geographers will benefit from greater familiarity with H.W.S. Cleveland. In his treatise *Landscape Architecture as Applied to the Wants of the West* (1873), for example, Cleveland "went beyond aesthetics, to consider labor conditions, housing patterns, ecology, economics, sanitation, recreation, transportation, and the troubling rise of a distinctly American consumerist capitalism, which seemed likely to have a massive impact on spatial dynamics" (p. 246). Sachs proposes that Cleveland's work represents the first urban planning textbook.

Through his scholarship on the likes of Garland and Cleveland, Sachs reveals the richness of the Arcadian tradition and its potential for application to the field of historical geography. More common to the geographical tradition is the fieldwork that Sachs employs. As he visits cemeteries, Indian burial mounds, and Civil War battlefields, Sachs demonstrates the importance of interacting with such constructed spaces of commemoration. Sachs' use of memoir to reflect upon these spaces is likely to be the most controversial aspect of *Arcadian America*. Sachs is remarkably candid in sharing his personal life as fodder for reflection. Some might question whether this approach is self-indulgent or tangential. At his best though, Sachs offers a model for geographers who strive to incorporate everyday spaces into an understanding of nature-society relations. Sachs provides geographers with a reminder of the need to personalize and reflect upon such experiences and to draw upon the humanities more thoroughly.

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*Maps of Paradise*. ALESSANDRO SCAFI. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013. Pp. 176, maps, illustrations, index. \$40.00 hardcover. ISBN 978-0-2260-8261-5.

*Maps of Paradise* is a distillation of Alessandro Scafi's larger 2006 work *Mapping Paradise: A History of Heaven on Earth*. Gone are pages of explanatory text, numerous examples, scores of black-and-white illustrations, and scholarly apparatus like endnotes. In their stead is a shortened book with enough verve for a wider audience yet enough scholarship for students and academics. In nine chapters Scafi – lecturer in medieval and Renaissance cultural history at the Warburg Institute, University of London – demonstrates how the idea of paradise was conceived, illustrated, and mapped from ancient times to the present. Each chapter contains several sections of exposition with an array of images, a "Visual Interlude" discussing a particular (and exemplar) map in more detail, and, finally, a short bibliographic essay. The result is a visually impressive and thought-provoking study showing how people perceived, situated, and mapped Eden over time.

The first chapter explores how the ideas of Eden, gardens of delight, and golden ages in the Judaeo-Christian, Greco-Roman, and Islamic worlds blended together to create the notion



of a terrestrial paradise. Scafi scrutinizes and analyzes the Bible, the Quar'an, and classical texts demonstrate the evolving concept of paradise. The word itself is traced from its Median roots as *pari-daiza* ("a walled enclosure") through Persian, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and the languages of Europe. The second, third, and fourth chapters take paradise from the written word to the cartographic image, describing how mapmakers placed past paradise, an event in space-time (the temptation and fall of Adam and Eve), onto a spatial representation of the world. Scafi contends that though the idea of placing an event on a map may seem odd to the modern mind, it is no different than the idea that satellite map *exactly* represents the ever-changing surface of the earth. The latter is, like the former, merely a snapshot in time; a representation of the earth, not the earth itself. Scafi uses examples like the 1442 *Mapa Mundi* of Giovanni Leardo (which shows "paradiso terestro" as a walled city in the farthest east); eleventh- and twelfth-century Beatus maps showing scenes from Genesis in the orient; and the walled Garden of Eden scenes on the easternmost reaches of the Ebstorf world map from the thirteenth century.

It is on these medieval maps of the world (the *mappae mundi*) where Scafi's explanation and analysis really shines. He notes that "On a medieval *mappa mundi*, a place took its importance from the event that had occurred there" and the location of an "event-place" was "governed by the rule of contiguity, not mathematically measured distance or direction" (p. 56). Thus, the *mappae* were not meant for travel or exactness, but were storytelling devices, with the beginning out East, at the top (the map is properly "orient-ed"), the more recent past in the middle, and modern times in the West. This is why the terrestrial paradise of Genesis was usually placed on the eastern edge of the landmass. Moving west, many *mappae mundi* depicted scenes from Persian or Alexandrine history. Around the Holy Land, in Jerusalem, the center of the map, references to Jesus and the crucifixion abound: it is the central event of Western Christian history. Finally, the western edge of the earth shows Europe of the day. The Hereford map, as an example, portrays Eden at the top and then progresses, as the eye moves southward through biblical and secular history with representations of such things as the Tower of Babel, Alexander the Great's camp, and the crucifixion of Jesus. In Europe, contemporary cities and kingdoms dot the landscape. The map also portrays the end of time, with references to the Christian end times and the return of Christ. Such maps, then, were spatial and temporal representations of the world, and the paradise of Eden can, without contradiction, coexist coterminously in time and space with those still living.

Chapters five through eight discuss the mapping of paradise during eras in which maps became more scientifically produced spatial representations of the landscape. As the Renaissance was dawning, mapmakers were incorporating notions of Greek climatic zones, Ptolemaic latitude and longitude, and nautical rigor into their cartography. Where was the Edenic paradise to be exactly placed in such geographies? As maps began to incorporate rhumb lines, graticules, more precise renderings of coastlines, and contemporary knowledge of faraway places, paradise was moved around or removed from the charts of the day. On Fra Mauro's ca. 1450 world map, for instance, Eden is moved to a roundel vignette in the lower left corner of the work. It is divorced from the map itself, as "Fra Mauro's intention was to map the regions of his own day, not to chart the process of humankind's history" (p. 94). Beginning in the late sixteenth century, scholars, theologians, and mapmakers placed the historical paradise in historical Mesopotamia, ferreting out proof in the biblical text and ancient authors. Others used the same clues to advocate for Armenia or the Holy Land as the location of Eden. By the nineteenth century, the paradise of the Bible was seen by many not as a factual truth, but a spiritual metaphor. Historians and archaeologists now sought the sources of Eden in the myths of the ancient civilizations of the Middle East. Although most scholars had abandoned the notion of ever finding the physical paradise, fundamentalist and fringe scholars still came up with theories, and maps, about the location of paradise. Some posited that it was the land under the Indian Ocean, under the Mediterranean Sea, or even in the sky.

Scafi ends his book with a short meditation on maps of Thomas More's *Utopia* and the popularity of a good place ("Eu-topia") that is also no place ("u-topia"), i.e., paradise. Scafi's contention is that the cartography of paradise reveals more about the cultural and intellectual lives of the peoples involved in mapping the place than it does about Eden itself. *Maps of Paradise* is another in a long line of works that portray maps not as just illustrations but cultural artifacts. Because the notion of paradise is so long lived in Western thought, Scafi is able to write both an intellectual history and a history of cartography following one idea through time. *Maps of Paradise* serves as a wonderful and colorful adjunct to those who already have his similar 2006 work *Mapping Paradise*; it is a great introduction for those who are unfamiliar with Scafi's earlier work.

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*Women and the Everyday City: Public Space in San Francisco, 1890-1915.* JESSICA ELLEN SEWELL. University of Minnesota Press, 2011. Pp. xxxiii+232, maps, diagrams, illustrations, index. \$75.00 cloth. ISBN 978-0-8166-6974-5.

How does a social movement use and shape urban space? How is the movement, in turn, shaped by the space it inhabits and moves through? In *Women and the Everyday City*, Jessica Ellen Sewell approaches these questions at the level of a single city—San Francisco—and sometimes even at the scale of the city block. Combing through diaries, memoirs, city directories, photographs, and advertisements from the period 1890 to 1915 (which covers the 1906 earthquake and aftermath), Sewell invites readers to roam the streets of downtown San Francisco in a woman's boots, learning to read the public built environment for signs of respectability and welcome (upholstered seating, flowers, tea), or their opposites (smoking, alcohol, dark wood). For the first several chapters, Sewell explores the details of women's increasing presence on sidewalks, on public transportation, in shops, in restaurants and cafeterias, in theaters and movie houses, and at parades and public rallies, along with the changing shapes and locations of such places, and the evolving etiquette applied to behavior within them.

Sewell makes good use of women's personal writings, and this grounding in actual everyday experiences is important to her central argument. Throughout the book, the imagined or ideal version of a public space, the built physical version, and the experience of being in that public space, are all held as distinct, but all influencing each other in a complicated dance, which continues into the present. "Women in public are, to an extent, still a source of collective anxiety today," notes Sewell (p. xxiii). Similarly, abundant but carefully selected illustrations (including clear, well-labeled maps) support her arguments throughout, in ways that geographers will certainly appreciate.

Perhaps Sewell's rigid, repeating structure of ideal-built-experienced makes these chapters feel more dissertation-like than some readers might prefer. It is no doubt difficult to make a chapter titled "Errands" (Chapter 2) much more exciting than actual errands are, for most of us. But the cumulative effect of so many well-presented details creates a convincing landscape for the penultimate (and the most successful) chapter, "Spaces of Suffrage." Here, the individual elements are finally added together, and the reader immediately grasps the subtle differences between a "parlor tea" and a "precinct meeting," and how a residential threshold might become a powerfully symbolic location. The clever strategies of suffragists to promote their cause (messages on napkins in ice cream parlors, lectures to the captive audience of passengers on a ferry, for two examples) become more than clever when seen geographically, as efforts to claim public

space. While this reader wanted to know more about how other movements such as labor and temperance compared to (or even informed) the suffrage movement with their own uses of public and private spaces, "Spaces of Suffrage" is a standout chapter that might easily be read on its own, but which draws considerable richness from the chapters that precede it.

Sewell's main actors are all white women in middle adulthood, middle-class or elite in social status. This has obvious limitations. Other researchers have found that age is an important factor in how cities are experienced, but that subject is not raised by Sewell's sources. For classroom use, this book might best be assigned with a book that has a stronger emphasis on race and marginalized women. Susan Craddock's *City of Plagues: Disease, Poverty, and Deviance in San Francisco* (Minnesota University Press 2004), for example, might make an excellent companion reading. Although the focus of Sewell's work is squarely on (some) women's experiences, there is much here to interest scholars beyond feminist geography. Street car design, public transit planning, culinary history, and the history of advertising all play a part in this story. The nearly car-less San Francisco described here may seem alien, or even utopian, to some students, and (like so much in this book) should promote discussions about how cities change, for whom, and why.

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*Everyday Life in the Early English Caribbean: Irish, Africans, and the Construction of Difference.* JENNY SHAW. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2013. Pp. xv+251, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$24.95 paper. ISBN 978-0-8203-4662-5.

In the decades prior to the emergence of the plantation complex characteristic of so many European-held islands in the Caribbean, the region, like many other Atlantic locations of encounter, settlement, and development, was marked by social, cultural, and racial fluidity. Jenny Shaw's study of Irish Catholics in the nascent period of England's Caribbean empire captures this notion perfectly. She begins with the premise that in this shifting social environment, most Irish migrants were viewed as "others" by English elites and consequently accorded a status little different from Africans; both groups were marginalized, and by many measures would fit into the category of unfree labor. How the Irish confronted and worked within long-established English social structures, Shaw contends, allowed them to navigate hierarchies and, ultimately, separate themselves from Africans.

The *alltagsgeschichte* methodology Shaw employs requires reading into the empty spaces left by archival sources which primarily represent the views of English colonial elites. The daily experiences of both Irish and Africans are, for the most part, missing from the record, and she relies on a creative reading of the sources to build her narrative, focusing on the "presence of absences" and a reliance on an "informed imagination" (p. 9). While the problems with such an approach are evident, happily there are few, if any, instances in which Shaw's suppositions push beyond responsible argument. Telling the story of the lived experiences of Irish West Indians whose ethnicity and social status located them in the nebulous space between freemen and slaves also requires confronting the overriding problem of the institutionalization of the plantation system in the eighteenth-century British West Indies, which set out clear markers of difference based around race and demography: black and enslaved versus white and free. Discovering the Irish space in this didactic world, and reading backwards into the everyday life history of this group, Shaw argues, is essential to illustrating the larger processes through which such a two-tiered hierarchy was created. In so doing, she also calls attention to the smaller, but no less important, social gradations that persisted long after slavery and race became the defining characteristics of otherness.

Shaw begins her study with a look at how the Irish were defined as different by English elites, who accorded them a status of inferiority based on dress, sexual mores, and religion. The same categories were applied to Africans, with the object of preserving a particular labor hierarchy in the pre-slavery period. Before the mass importation of Africans, both they and the Irish were equally critical to the success of the plantation enterprise and thus were viewed similarly insofar as justification of their roles as laborers was concerned. Even so, Shaw traces the beginning of the creation of difference between Irish and Africans to planters' anxieties that both groups might make common cause in rebellion and the creation of separate laws governing slaves and servants. Chapter two is a further elucidation of this argument, exploring the role of the census, and how European races were merged into the singular category "white." While this erasure of European difference served the needs of imperial elites by implying an orderly colonial population, it also provided the Irish with a legitimized means of separation from Africans with whom they shared common life and labor experiences.

Why such an intentional creation of difference seemed necessary is detailed in chapter three as Shaw explores the plantation communities in which both Irish and Africans lived and worked in a creolized milieu of shared experiences. Woven into this tapestry of similarities were shared living spaces, labor activities, and most probably, sexual interrelations. While superficial variances between Africans and Irish existed, such as tastes in food and clothing, this commonality of everyday life sparked English fears of a solidarity that might threaten the established order. To reinforce the concept of difference, Shaw contends that aside from census categories, elites also created disparate regulations and punishments for servants and slaves. By distinguishing Irish servants from African slaves in this fashion, elites began the process of co-opting the Irish through the use of blackness as the primary sign of difference. For the Irish themselves, their whiteness provided a path away from inferior status, and Shaw asserts that the Irish largely accepted this framework, even going so far as to reject extant similarities with Africans in order to free themselves from the label of "white slave."

Yet even with assimilation into the English power structure, the Irish found avenues of resistance that ultimately enhanced their pursuit of societal distance from African slaves. In chapters four and five, Shaw shows how the maintenance, however surreptitious, of Roman Catholic belief, and occasional alliance with rebelling slaves, encouraged the fears of English planters of French or Spanish invasions abetted by Irish Catholics, or slave revolts in which Irish laborers might participate. As such, Shaw argues that the English had more to gain by emphasizing Irish difference from slaves, even at the expense of tolerating a quiet Catholicism and often sparing the Irish from the exceptionally violent reprisals directed against rebellious slaves than enforcing rigid, impermeable social categories. For Shaw, this indicates Irish success at self-definition and status assertion within the spaces created by colonial power structures.

This fascinating study is one of the latest in a decade-plus body of literature on the colonial Caribbean which acknowledges the towering place of race, slavery, and imperialism in its history but also manages to explore the subtleties and nuances that shaped the region's historical experience. While the Caribbean Irish population has received some scholarly attention, notably in works by Hilary Beckles and Donald Akenson, Shaw's study elevates their importance by casting them as lead actors in the shaping of English West Indian culture. Suitable for specialized upper division and graduate courses on the Caribbean or Atlantic World, or courses dealing with race and identity, this work is a welcome addition to the growing scholarship on marginalized populations in one of the most important sites of colonial activity in the Americas.

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*Imprints on Native Lands: The Miskito-Moravian Settlement Landscape in Honduras.* BENJAMIN F. TILLMAN. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2011. Pp. xi+187, maps, photographs, diagrams, tables, appendices, index. \$45.00 cloth. ISBN 978-0-8165-2454-9.

This is a work firmly fixed in the classic tradition of Latin American cultural and historical geography that draws explicitly on the approach of Sauer, West, and Jordan. Based on Tillman's extensive field work in the Honduran Mosquitia, this work serves as one of the best examples of "doing" cultural and historical geography in recent years. Its wellspring is the monograph approach championed by Sauer and others, which identifies the geographer's task as being to choose a piece of territory and study it in detail, becoming intimately familiar with it in terms of the physical, cultural, and historical dimensions to answer the fundamental question "how did this place come to look like this?" Tillman addresses this question, and much more, in this study of the cultural encounter beginning in the 1800s between the Miskito Indians of Honduras and the German-based Moravian Church.

Tillman breaks his study down into six themed chapters, clearly addressing each theme in a comprehensive fashion. After a brief introduction to the field methodology employed in the study, the author begins with a description of the physical environment and the historical background of Mosquitia, which incorporates the Caribbean coast of both Nicaragua and Honduras. This savannah grassland stands in sharp contrast to the tropical highlands that dominate most of Middle America, and has historically been relatively isolated from the influence of the Spanish during the colonial period, opening the door to influences by other European powers. After his description of the physical landscape, Tillman shifts his focus to the Miskito themselves, discussing the various notions of the origins of this people, which incorporates Caribe as well as African influence through the escape of slaves from Caribbean sugar plantations and wrecked slave ships. This historical background is well presented and clearly lays out the ethnogenesis debates concerning the Miskito, as well as their very interesting form of governance. This chapter also introduces the Moravian Church, contextualizing it as part of the Protestant dynamism of Europe in the fifteenth century in general and its growth in Germany, and illuminates the proselytizing drive that brought Moravian missionaries to this corner of Middle America.

With the physical and historical setting laid out, Tillman then explores the various aspects of Miskito culture that have been affected by the arrival of the Moravian missionaries, focusing almost exclusively on the Miskito of Honduras. The treatment follows the classic cultural and historical format of a Berkeley School monograph, including chapters on the settlement landscape, sacred places, house types, the agricultural system, and cemeteries. Using as many primary sources as can be found, each chapter describes and then discusses changes brought about by the arrival of Moravian missionaries. In most cases, the author also discusses changes to each particular aspect of culture—whether settlement form, house types, cemeteries—that have been further affected by changes that have come to Mosquitia due to its encounter with the global economy as well as with the movement of mestizo culture from western Honduras to the east, as land hungry ladinos move into the relatively sparsely settled Mosquito Coast.

To illustrate the various aspects of culture and history in which Tillman is interested, he employs a wealth of photographs, data, and sketches that fully illustrate unique aspects of the Miskito/Moravian landscape. The author also includes appendices that lay out his field work data, including population data, plant names, settlement names, toponyms, and other data, all of which can serve as a touchstone for future researchers. There is even an appendix on the names of house parts used in Mosquitia, including the English, Miskito, and Spanish terms, which will be very helpful to researchers following in Tillman's footsteps.

The greatest strength of this study is its close adherence to the style of the Berkeley/Louisiana State University/University of Texas cultural and historical geography as practiced by Sauer, West, and Jordan. But, just as this is its greatest strength, it also represents its greatest weakness. Drawn from that classic monograph style of cultural and historical geography, Tillman does not engage at all with the so-called “cultural turn” in geography, which sought to read into the landscape issues of class, gender, race, ideology, and power. Thus, writers critical of the Sauerian approach, including Duncan, Gregory, Jackson, Cosgrove, and Mitchell, are not given a nod. At one level, this is understandable, since those writers can make the formulation of an historical/cultural approach to a place like the Honduran Mosquitia more problematic, but the work represented by these authors could have informed Tillman’s conclusion. In particular Tillman implies that in many ways the Miskito of Honduras are undergoing a new colonial encounter as the ladinos move from the highlands to the savannah, demanding access to land and resources that have been held by the Miskito for hundreds of years. How will this new colonial encounter play out? What will be the role of the Catholic Church as it displaces the traditional religious entities, including the Moravians? In addition, the narrative could have been enriched by an encounter with postmodern cultural and historical geography, which in many ways provide a framework for the indigenous mapping projects that Tillman quite rightly states will be critical to Miskito resistance to the encroachment of outsiders into their land.

Theoretical criticisms aside, this work is wonderfully written, clear and cogent, and well-illustrated, which brings the words on the page to life. More importantly, this work serves as a reminder of what field work can accomplish and how it can be presented in a way that sheds light on a place that may have been neglected. Moreover, the author has laid out the historical and landscape changes that have occurred due to movement of Moravian missionaries into the region, and the further changes that may well occur as that influence wanes. This book, then, serves two important purposes: first, as a description of the fascinating cultural and historical geography of a place, and second as a model for how to conduct and present fieldwork to a wide audience. The author makes the Honduran Mosquitia come alive and does something that all well written geography should do: it makes you want to go and see it for yourself.

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*Sea Monsters on Medieval and Renaissance Maps*. CHET van DUZER. London: The British Library, 2013. Pp. 144, maps, index. 20.00 hardcover. ISBN 978-0-7123-5890-3.

Chet van Duzer boasts an impressive background of cartographic analysis, and in his newest work he turns his attention to the eye-catching but woefully understudied topic of sea monsters on Medieval and Renaissance maps. He defines sea monsters as “an aquatic creature that was thought astonishing and exotic,” noting that most originated from the classical idea that each land creature its equivalent in the sea (pp. 8-9). The underlying argument of the work is that cartographers used sea monsters on their maps for two main purposes, to serve as a graphic record of literature, and as decoration (p. 11). In this regard, Duzer offers a sublime examination of the genealogy of individual sea monsters and the artistic techniques of placing them on maps, but ultimately fails to place his analysis in a broader framework which would make the book more accessible to a wider historical audience. As such, the book suffers from a bit of an antiquarian feel.

*Sea Monsters* is divided into roughly forty distinct topics ranging from the analysis of individual maps, to "How to buy a Sea Monster," and "The Curious Career of the Flying Turtle." Inserted throughout are excursions which provide an examination of a type of sea monsters, such as whimsical or dangerous ones. These excursions aside, the book follows a strict chronological order beginning with a brief discussion of classical antecedents before moving on to an analysis of the medieval Mappaemundi T-O maps, ending at the seventeenth century when sea monsters began disappearing from maps. One wonders, though, if Duzer would have been better served if he was less rigid in this temporal approach, and opted for a geographical or thematic organization. For example, he analyzes two works by the famous cartographer Gerardus Mercator, a 1541 globe and a 1569 world map, but in between these two discussions are sections on remoras, a possible forged globe, sawfish, the Flying Turtle, and a Giacomo Gastaldi map (pp. 86-103). Additionally, two sections on whales are interrupted by a section on "A Nest of Sea Monsters at the Bottom of the World" (pp. 50-54). As most of these sections are rather short, the overall cohesion suffers as the reader darts from topic to topic and location to location.

The organizational issue points to a larger concern, specifically that Duzer could have done better placing his analysis of the maps within a broader framework. Throughout the work there is superb discussion of individual maps, but he does not draw back his lens to focus on the larger picture. There are references to broader implications throughout, but they are only hinted at, and often superficial. For instance he observes a strange paradox where sea monsters were often located on the least explored areas of map, and thus often hindered map improvements as they served to impede travel and exploration (pp. 12-19, 118). He observes that the 1569 Mercator map has no sea monsters positioned above 50° N and most of them were placed in South America and the Pacific as these areas became the new "realms of marvels" (p. 105). Duzer offers these insights without much discussion but it raises obvious questions. How well were these areas explored as of 1569 and how effective were sea monsters in preventing exploration? It is undoubtedly a difficult question to answer, but it is not even addressed.

The above critiques are not intended to be overly critical as the work demonstrates some superb examples of erudition and research. The highlight is Duzer's ability to trace the lineage of these sea monsters, not only from other maps, but from contemporary written sources specifically. Throughout the work he shows how cartographers often incorporated the latest "scientific" publications as the basis for their sea monsters. This is evident with a sea pig depicted on Olaus Magnus' 1539 map. Duzer is able to distinguish this sea pig from similar ones found on a Genoese world map and a Madrid manuscript on Ptolemy's *Geography*, instead he traces the true source to a 1537 pamphlet published in Rome which describes a creature found in the "German Ocean" the same year (p. 85). He employs this standard of scholarship for the all the maps under consideration. It is also refreshing that Duzer is completely transparent about that which he does not know. He concedes that an image of Jonah on a medieval mappamundi "is something of a mystery" and that a nest of sea monsters on a fifteenth century map "is a startling innovation that defies ready explanation" (pp. 19, 54). The other trait which is sure to catch the eye of the readers is the beautiful images. The author and the British Library both deserve great praise for creating such a visually stunning work.

Duzer notes that his work is the first one to treat the topic of sea monsters because of the difficulties associated with the primary sources, so one can sympathize with his struggles. Nevertheless, one feels that this may have been a missed opportunity to really lay the groundwork for future analysis. It is clear that he has the skills necessary for this, as he displays such scholarship and erudition in his treatment of individual maps. A great example of the missed opportunity is in his discussion on Magnus' map of northwestern Europe which contained "the most important and influential sea monsters" of any Renaissance map (p. 81). The Italian scholar Luigi de Anna

has suggested that these monsters were intended to scare off foreign fisherman from Scandinavian waters. Duzer comments only that, "if this intriguing suggestion is correct," then this map had economic significance not shared by other maps (p. 86). The analysis stops there, and the fact that he perceives the idea as "intriguing" rather than profound or insightful hints that he has his reservations, but he fails to elaborate. His conclusion also points to an economic element. Citing a 1625 map which depicts whale fishing he concludes, "whales, the largest creatures in the ocean, are no longer monsters but rather natural marine storehouses of commodities to be harvested" (p. 118). Throughout the work Duzer hints at the connections between sea monsters on maps and broader economic and social trends, but ultimately decides not to expand on their relationship. In short, cartographic specialists will value the erudition, general audiences will appreciate the great imagery, but a general historical audience may not be satisfied.

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*Company Towns: Corporate Order and Community.* NEIL WHITE. University of Toronto Press, 2012. Pp. xiv+229, index. \$49.50 hardcover. ISBN 978-1-4426-4327-7.

A historical "company town" featured a single corporate employer that owned or managed virtually all local institutions. Company towns were usually established in economically peripheral regions, and while no exact definition of a company town exists, most company towns were closely tied to some extractive industry, such as logging or mining. Existing scholarship on company towns argues homogeneity: the company possessed a legal, economic, and social stranglehold on the day-to-day life of a town's residents, and corporate interests always trumped personal power. The life cycle of a company town around the world would follow the same basic plot: "capitalist expansion, corporate control, and resident dependence" (p. 3).

Neil White challenges this view of uniformity, contesting the "stereotyped view of company towns" (p. 5) that has defined the structuralist approach since the 1970s. White argues that company towns were not at all homogenous, and that individual decisions and decision-makers across the class spectrum played an enormous role on the historical development of a town. The author does not ignore the power of a company or the dependence of a town's residents. Rather, White is able to divorce the corporate displays of power from the everyday experiences of residents.

His thesis is argued through a comparative examination of two company towns: Corner Brook, a pulp and paper mill town in western Newfoundland, Canada and Mount Isa, a remote mining town in the outback of northwestern Queensland, Australia. These two towns were selected for a variety of reasons: both were founded in the early 1920s, both were located in countries that relied heavily on exporting raw materials, both were founded in former British dependencies, and both were closely associated with British capital.

Wider global systems of economic development are apparent. For example, in the first few decades after Corner Brook's founding, a British armament firm, the U.S.-based International Paper, and the Bank of England were just a few of the power brokers financially involved with the town's mill enterprise. Both Corner Brook and Mount Isa were initially dependent on foreign investments for profit, yet in the midst of such palpable external influence, the residents of both company towns possessed agency. This agency was apparent in the decisions made by individuals associated with the town, and White explains additional influences upon each place that were never codified in a formal business plan. Local topography, managerial stubbornness, community reaction, local politics, and even chance shaped future events in each town.



Geography also played an essential role in influencing company towns. Corner Brook was established by a last-minute change to secure better port access to the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Mount Isa's mining potential was initially stymied while waiting for a railroad to reach the outback interior. Similarly, both sites were surrounded by unplanned, unaffiliated "fringe towns" beyond the company's authority. Of additional interest is the fact that while the "company" associated with each company town often changed over the years, individual and community actions were mostly unaffected by corporate ownership transactions. Eventually, the companies began to sell company-owned homes and turned away from paternalism by the 1960s as part of a wider global trend towards more efficient corporate systems.

The book contains six major chapters, each with a dominant theme: Corner Brook's industry, Mount Isa's industry, urban morphology, labor, civic life, and personal relationships. The powerful role of the company is seen overtly (in reactions to labor unrest in both communities) and symbolically (in the naming of town streets for corporate executives.)

White's prose is engaging. The narratives of changing commodity prices, economic conditions, and industrial regulations were surprisingly readable. The author is at his best when describing the complex network of social and personal interactions, including the conflict at Mount Isa through the eyes of labor, entrepreneurship and community in Corner Brook, and the demographic situation of Mount Isa and its resulting gendered atmosphere. Intertwined with townspeople's concerns about prohibition or recreation is a retelling of social power that crosses class borders and avoids a simple taxonomy. White notes that "social processes made company towns, and made them distinct from one another" (p. 30), and the author has done a commendable job at expressing these diverse perspectives.

Academic scholarship of company towns has increased in recent years. Margaret Crawford's notable *Building the Workingman's Paradise* (1996) set the stage for the current wave of broad scholarly investigations of company towns, including Hardy Green's *The Company Town* (2010), and *Company Towns in the Americas* (2011), an edited volume by Oliver Dinius and Angela Vergara. Important regional-focused approaches include Linda Carlson's *Company Towns of the Pacific Northwest* (2004). Additionally, many works exist that analyze the history of a single company town, with varying form. White's book artfully finds its place between these broad surveys and specific town histories.

While White has an exemplary approach, the book's overall effectiveness could be enhanced with a wider analysis of additional company towns. Corner Brook and Mount Isa are divergent in location, economy, and social environment, but these sites might benefit from comparison to experiences from company towns in the United States or Latin America. A broader inclusion would enable additional analysis of towns with similar resources: for example, a comparison of Mount Isa to Arizona copper mining towns. However, the author's preemptive rebuttal that a two-town analysis "allowed for a broad and deep engagement with the history of each place" (p. 6) is borne out in the text, and a reader should not object to the two-town model.

White notes that the structuralist approach to understanding company towns "is woefully silent on the human agents and social processes that created community..." (p.7). If the purpose of this book was to rethink the old image of company towns, the author has succeeded. Neil White has effectively argued the diversity in community of the historical company town, and this work holds valuable significance for scholars of historical geography.

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*The Last Days of the Rainbelt*. DAVID J. WISHART. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2013. Pp. xviii+202, maps, charts, graphs, photographs, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95 cloth. ISBN 978-0-0832-4618-8.

In this twenty-first century it is hard to imagine the central High Plains, part of the western Great Plains, as a region of dense agricultural settlement with booming population growth. Traveling across the region, one is struck by the endless prairie horizons, the smallness of the towns, which are few and far between, and the thinness of the population density. Many counties average less than two people per square mile and most have for decades experienced an overall population decline.

In *The Last Days of the Rainbelt*, David J. Wishart presents a different picture of the High Plains and in the process brings to life a seldom-told story in the region's history. Professor Wishart, a historical geographer at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln, is a highly respected scholar of the Plains. *Historical Geography* readers may already be familiar with his earlier works, including *An Unspeakable Sadness: The Dispossession of the Nebraska Indians* (1994), *Encyclopedia of the Great Plains* (2004), and *Encyclopedia of the Great Plains Indians* (2007). If so, readers will be pleased to know that this new study continues the high-quality scholarship that Wishart is known for.

In the introduction, Professor Wishart explains that during the late nineteenth century, a prevailing scientific notion held that the climate of the Great Plains was being transformed by the process of pioneer settlement. In other words, the semi-arid plains were becoming wetter because farmers were tilling the prairie soil – hence the saying “rain follows the plow.” Today, this type of thinking seems preposterous, but in the 1880s, overconfident settlers used it to justify their movement onto the dry, High Plains. Settlers referred to this area as the “Rainbelt” because they expected the rains to come shortly after their arrival.

Following the introduction are four chapters arranged in chronological order. Chapter 1, spanning 1854-1885, details the movement of settlement up to the edge of the Rainbelt. Professor Wishart divides the central Plains into four settlement zones, and focuses his study on the Rainbelt counties of southwestern Nebraska, western Kansas, and eastern Colorado, which are in zone four. He explains that the eastern zones were basically the Midwest extended, especially in terms of farming techniques, which proved woefully unsuited when transferred to western zones. Chapter 2, spanning 1886-1890, details the mad rush by settlers into the Rainbelt. It took just five years for Rainbelt counties to triple, and even quadruple, in population. In many areas, new towns and farming communities were founded literally overnight.

Chapter 3 provides a glimpse of life in the Rainbelt around 1890. Professor Wishart describes how settlers found water, built rudimentary homes, planted their first crops, and socialized with distant neighbors. Chapter 4, spanning 1890-1896, details the inevitable failure of Rainbelt settlers and the desertion of their communities. The early 1890s were terrible drought years in the Rainbelt and farmers quickly went under due to repeated crop failures and burdensome debt. Wishart devotes a considerable portion of this chapter to the stories of rainmakers. These men were charlatans and hucksters who, using secret rainmaking machines, defrauded desperate farmers and communities out of tens of thousands of dollars. A short epilogue concludes the study and brings the story of the Rainbelt up to the present time.

Professor Wishart thoroughly mines an impressive collection of sources. Period newspaper accounts, historical climatic data, land office records, county histories, census returns, period government reports, and settler diaries all contribute to his story. A central and indispensable source, though, is a collection of old Rainbelt settler interviews conducted during a five-month period in 1933 and 1934. They were part of a short-lived New Deal program called the Civil Works Administration (CWA). Wishart explains that he came across their leather-bound volumes many

years ago while searching dark corners of the Colorado Historical Society archives. It was that “discovery” which piqued his interest in the Rainbelt. All sources are thoroughly documented with endnotes.

The research in the book is impeccable and Professor Wishart does a masterful job of weaving an engaging narrative out of the many disparate sources. This, I think, is the book’s main strength. The value of the CWA interviews cannot be overstated and Wishart acknowledges that they are what differentiates his book from earlier attempts to tell the story of the Rainbelt. For instance, without the CWA interviews, most of what appears in Chapter 3 would have been impossible to recount. The pioneer settler interviews are the best information about the Rainbelt experience and Wishart skillfully weaves facts and insights from them into a cohesive narrative that brings the communities back to life.

Another strength of the book is its presentation. The University of Nebraska Press produced a small (16cm x 24cm) and attractive volume, and priced it affordably. This was probably because of its short length (only 202 pages, plus front matter). I can easily picture this book for sale at a plains historical attraction gift shop or for checkout at a public library. The price, subject, writing quality, and size make it attractive to an educated, popular reader. I regard this as a strength because it always benefits the historical geography discipline to have some of its best work accessible to as wide an audience as possible. And this book accomplishes that.

The one shortcoming of the book that I can identify is, unfortunately, a result of its attractive presentation. Sixteen custom maps are used in support and all are critical for understanding the research. But because of the small format, they are printed at a very small scale and therefore can be hard to read. The same is true of fourteen period photographs. My eyesight is better than someone of advanced age (though I am no longer a teenager, either) and even I had difficulty reading the small text and details. But this shortcoming is relatively minor and easily outweighed by the book’s numerous strengths. I highly recommend it.

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